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THE EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOKS

HANDBOOKS OF CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOKS

A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN LITERATURE TO THE MIDDLE OF THE SECOND CENTURY

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FOREWORD.

THIS is an interesting and useful little book. We none of us know Early Christian Literature half as well as we should, and this little book ought to lure us on to study it more.

The author is one of those parish clergy who in the midst of all their parochial duties have been an example to us in never giving up their reading. The information he gives in this book is certain to be trustworthy.

A. F. LONDON.

HOLY WEEK, 1919.

WASHINGTON
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NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION.

JUST fifty years ago De Pressensé prefaced the English edition of his *Early Years of Christianity* with a statement of the vital importance of popularizing the records of the primitive Church. Those were the days of the transitory reign of Strauss' *Leben Jesu* and the *Vie de Jésus* of Renan; these books were being pondered in cottages and workshops abroad, they were circulated by thousands of copies, their influence found its way into novels and reviews: poetic expression, grace and piquancy made the negative view attractive. It was time for faith to produce her original title-deeds, she must not linger on the shore, but cross the stormy sea and plant her feet in the enemy's country on the soil of contemporary criticism. "We are persuaded," De Pressensé said, "that the best method of defence against the shallow scepticism which assails us and which dismisses, with a scornful smile, documents, the titles of which it has never examined, is to retrace the history of primitive Christianity, employing all the materials accumulated by the Christian science of our day" (p. vii.).

The lapse of half a century has certainly not made the necessity less urgent. Processes of disintegration

have been steadily working upon religion all the time: we see their monuments all around us. Some noble and effective defences have been raised against the persistent force of the waves, acute and original minds have laboured on the side of careful and unprejudiced investigation, extraordinary good fortune has disinterred from libraries and dust-heaps lost documents and confirmatory writings. For the scholar it may be said that, whatever estimate he may put upon the value of what his materials tell him, the materials themselves, whether canonical books or writings of the first ages of the Church's life, stand authenticated, assured, certified in a way they were not in the time of De Pressensé. But though this be so, it may be doubted if the security thus attained extends much beyond a relatively small group of specially interested scholars. It is doubtful if the average educated man knows any more to-day about the early writings of Christianity than his father or grandfather. It is certain that the uneducated are untouched by the steadying influence of the increased knowledge of the early facts of the Christian church. Too often, as De Pressensé foretold would be the case if his cry were unheeded, "the sweeping assertions of an unbelief, more credulous than bigotry, pass for axioms".

And yet, so far as the literary remains of the first century after the Crucifixion are concerned, and apart altogether from the countless fields of inquiry into which their study leads, the extent of the actual mass of the evidence is small and not difficult to master: the hand of time has left but few fragments,

and they are most of them slight and short. Most of them may be said to be simple; they breathe the unstudied freshness of a primitive artlessness. A mind very little trained in theological thinking or historical method could in a few days acquaint itself with their outstanding features, and put a workiug estimate upon their relation to the wider question of the meaning of Christianity.

A reader of Christian sympathies taking up an early Christian writing for the first time will not find himself confronted with theological subtleties, and problems alien and uninteresting. He will breathe an atmosphere of freshness, and be in touch with the great simple forces that lie at the root of his own spiritual being. He will feel the breath of a wonderful supernatural life, expanding in innocent effectiveness amid pagan corruption: something flower-like growing amid the decay of a dying world: something child-like and assured of its future hopefully challenging the settled certainties of cynical experience around its home. He will be sensible of a spirit of joy inspiring the brotherhood of a society that has escaped from tyranny, and of a peace not of this world. He will gain glimpses of the natural development of such a society into systematic order, and meet the brethren at their Baptisms and Eucharists: he will listen to the sermon of some unknown brother, hear the strain of unstudied hymns burst from the rapt lips of catechumens, follow a Polycarp or an Ignatius to their coveted crown, and catch something of the last echoes of prophetic ecstasy. And below, beneath the tide

that flows so softly, he will recognize spiritual realities, the faith that caused the growth, the force of the divine facts that attracted, saved, united, and upheld, the assurance of the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Revelation of the Father, living in human temples by the Holy Spirit. "You do not so much as listen to anyone," says Ignatius "if he speaks of anything but Jesus Christ in truth" (Eph. vi. 2). And Clement cries "The sceptre (of the majesty) of God, even our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of arrogance or of pride, though He might have done so, but in lowliness of mind, according as the Holy Spirit spake concerning Him" (c. xvi.).

The certainties that are embalmed in our creeds live in these pages in unquestioned power. They are not yet articulated, interrelated, distinguished with scientific precision, but, as in the New Testament, they lie behind all thought and practice as the source of the new power, the inspiration of the simple pageant of holiness and purity that is moving in the heart of heathen cities. We learn here how faith and life are interlocked, and how faith is no unreasoning assent to a fossilized formula, but a glad embrace of truth, that proves itself in the steps whereon it leads us. And the light that these writings throw back on the earlier records that we call the New Testament is clear and bright. The impression of a candid reader must surely be that throughout the whole period from Clement in A.D. 95 to Justin in A.D. 150, speaking generally and without dwelling upon the manner and date of the composition of the particular docu-

ments, the New Testament as the record of the life and work of the Incarnate Christ, and of the teaching of His followers, the founders of His Church, was in being and in the supreme place of honour. There is scarcely a page of an early writer without a direct quotation from a canonical book, or that does not in some way recall some familiar text. It is not the place here to dogmatize upon the exact date of each of the Four Gospels, as we have them, but at any rate the early Christian books make it certain that their contents were regarded early in the second century with the same confidence and reverence with which we regard them, and that this supremacy presupposes and requires their apostolic recognition in the first.

How helpful, too, when sundered Christians are yearning for reunion, and for the throwing down of intellectual barriers long ago set up in the heat of controversy, to go back to "the hole whence we were digged," to be able to add to the evidences of the New Testament on Church rites, government, organization, and ideals, the confirmation of this further and yet primitive stage of development! A sincere mind, touched by the simplicity of these early pictures of brotherhood made actual, authority fatherly, and sacraments real, will surely be disposed to think that what was sufficient for the early age, when the Church of God was young and full of growth, comprehends all that is vital now, and that the way back to unity is chiefly in the recovery of the spirit, that was not only content with the simplicity of its setting, but delighted in it

with the joy of gladness, and found it the mightiest instrument for the conversion of the world.

It is to gather together in a compact form what is known of the earliest writings of Christianity outside the New Testament, that these short studies are written. They lay no claim to originality, they simply attempt to reproduce the opinions of the best scholars. At the same time the writings themselves have been studied in detail. An effort has been made to set each book in its historical setting, to let the writer by means of summaries and quotations speak for himself, and to lay special emphasis on passages which describe with any vividness the actual life of the developing Church. The Bibliography will show where fuller knowledge of these books and of the age in which they were written can be found.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Introduction	v
Bibliography	xiii
Table of Dates	xvii
Epistle of Clement of Rome	1
A Homily by an Unknown Writer	10
The Epistles of Ignatius	13
The Epistle of Polycarp	20
The Letter of the Smyrnæans	24
The Teaching of the Apostles (The Didache)	30
The Epistle of Barnabas	37
The Shepherd of Hermas	42
The Epistle to Diognetus	50
Papias	55
Gnostic systems	60
Apocryphal Books	65
The Odes of Solomon	76
Justin Martyr	81
The Apology of Aristides	91
Tatian's Oration and Diatessaron	98
Index	105

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A LIST OF DATES.

A.D.	Roman and Jewish.	Christian Literature, etc.
1	Census of Quirinius, 6-7	
10	Tiberius, 14-37	
20	Pontius Pilate procurator, 26-36	The Crucifixion, 29-30.
30	Caligula, 37-41 Josephus born, 37-38	Conversion of St. Paul, 35.
40	Claudius, 41-54 London founded by Aulus Plautius, 47	*Epistle of St. James*, *c.* 45.
50	Nero, 54-68 Felix procurator, 52	Birth of Clement of Rome, *c.* 50. *Thessalonians*, *Galatians*, *Corinthians*, *Romans* (52-58). *Epistles of Captivity* (59-61).
60	Festus succeeds Felix Burning of Rome and Persecution of Christians, 64 Galba, 68 Otho, 69 Vitellius, 69	*St. Mark*, 60; *St. Luke*, 61; *Acts*, 62; (*Dict. Ap. Church*); or *St. Mark*, 65; *St. Luke*, 65-70 (J. A. Robinson). James of Jerusalem died, *c.* 60 1 *Peter* (?); *Hebrews*; *Pastoral Epistles* (?) Birth of Polycarp.
70	Vespasian, 70-79 Siege and Sack of Jerusalem, 70 Titus, 79-81	*Gospel of St. Matthew* ± 75-90 (Moffatt). *Acts*, "*shortly after* 70," (J. A. Robinson). *Epistle of Barnabas*, 70-79 (Lightfoot).

A.D.	Roman and Jewish.	Christian Literature, etc.
80	Domitian, 81-96 Agricola in Britain, 78-85	*Teaching of the Apostles*, 80-100 (Lightfoot). *Apocalypse*, 81-96, 100-150 (Moffatt).
90	Nerva, 96-98 Trajan, 98-117	*The Gospel and Epistles of St. John.* *Epistle of Clement*, *c.* 95 (Lightfoot). *Gospel of Hebrews.* *Gospel of Nazarenes* } before 100 (Moffatt).
100		*Epistles of Ignatius and Epistle of Polycarp* } "Early Years of Second Century" (Lightfoot). Original *Gospel of Thomas.* Gnostic Activity.
110	Hadrian, 117-138	*Gospel of Egyptians*, 110-130 (Moffatt). Ebionitic *Gospel of Twelve* (?)
120		Activity of Basilides. *Apology* of Quadratus. Aquila's Version of O.T. *Protevangelium Jacobi* (?) 2 *Clement*, 120-140 (Lightfoot).
130	Insurrection of Bar-Cochba, 132-135 Antoninus Pius, 138-161	*Hermas* ± 130 ? (Moffatt). *Expositions* of Papias, *c.* 130-140 (Lightfoot). *Epistle to Diognetus*, i-x (Moffatt). *Apology* of Aristides, *c.* 140. Birth of Irenaeus, *c.* 140.

A.D.	Roman and Jewish	Christian Literature, etc.
140		*Apoc. Peter*, before 150 ? (Moffatt). 2 *Peter* (? Moffatt). Marcion's N.T. Canon. Tatian in Rome.
150		Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, 155-165. Tatian's "*Oration to the Greeks*". Justin's *First Apology*. *Gospel of Peter* (? Moffatt). Martyrdom of Polycarp, *c.* 156. *Acts of John*, 145-155 (Kirsopp Lake). Justin's Second *Apology*. *Acts of Thomas*, 154-222 (Burkitt). *Odes of Solomon*, 150-200 (Bernard). Heretical Gospels of Basilides and Marcion.
160	Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, 161-180	Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*. Martyrdom of Justin, *c.* 163. Melito, 160-190. *Acts of Paul*, 160-200 (Kirsopp Lake). Symmachus, *Comment. on Matthew* (Euseb., *H.E.* vi. 17). Tatian's *Diatessaron*, *c.* 170. Hegesippus, fl. 150-180.

See C. H. Turner, Art. "*Chronology*," Hastings' *Dict. Bible;* J. Moffatt, Historical Tables, *Intr. to Literature of New Test.* (2nd edit.), pp. xvii-xxiii; A. C. Zenos, Art. "*Dates*," *Dict. Apost. Church;* W. M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen;* A. Harnack, *Geschichte der Altchristl. Lit.*, ii. (1897); J. A. Robinson, *Study of the Gospels* (1902), pp. 1-22; Bp. Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1 vol. (1893).

THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT OF ROME.

The Epistle of Clement was written from the Church of Rome to the Church of Corinth about the year A.D. 95. Its object was not unlike that of the 1st Epistle of St. Paul to the same Church. But the spirit of party and lack of unity at Corinth was now appearing in an intenser form. Indeed it was now not so much parties as headstrong and ill-advised individuals that were causing serious trouble. They had actually gone so far as to obtain the deposition of certain presbyters, who had been regularly appointed and had done their duty admirably. The account of this breach of Church order reached the ears of the Christians at Rome—it would take a little over a week for the news to travel—when the Roman Church was in the throes of the persecution of the Emperor Domitian, which, though not of the sweeping character of Nero's thirty years before, seems to have been peculiarly trying from its spasmodic nature. It was never known when the blow would come, or who would be struck, and every Christian as a follower of a religion unauthorized by the State was equally open to attack. The Epistle seems to have been dispatched when the storm had blown over. We gather that its object was achieved, and that its rebuke, firm and sincere, and couched in most tactful form as it was, with the authority of the Roman Church behind it, reduced the Corinthian Christians to order. It was treasured by them, and read at their services far on in the next century.

This view of the date of the Epistle is quite well supported by its contents. Its reference to the martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul, and its quoting of the Epistle to the Hebrews place it after A.D. 64. Its use by Polycarp in his Epistle to the Philippians shows it to have been written before A.D. 110. Its allusion to two persecutions—the martyrs in the first being "those champions who lived very near to our own time" and "the noble examples which belong to our generation" (v. 1), while "the sudden and repeated calamities and reverses" of the second were alluded to as actual contemporary troubles—points without question to the commonly accepted date. Presbyters, moreover, are still alive who have succeeded the successors of the apostles (xliv. 3). The titles Bishop and Presbyter (ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος) are not yet distinguished, nor are the offices yet differentiated, as was the case very early in the next century, according to the evidence of the Epistles of Ignatius. There is also the witness of later writers (Hegesippus, Eusebius, and Irenaeus), who connect the Epistle with the time of Clement, the third Bishop of Rome, who was Bishop during the last ten years of the century.

Though its date and object and production by the Church of Rome may thus be regarded as beyond question, its ascription to Clement rests only on the authority of writers beginning with Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200). The earlier writers use language which does not actually imply that he wrote it. They regard it as the expression of the mind of a Church, not of an individual, and that is the way in which its author seems to look upon it. Yet the style and composition of the Epistle bear the stamp of one mind; it could not have been produced by a Committee. And Clement is stated by the writer of *Hermas*, which was probably written between 110 and 125, to have been en-

trusted with the task of such correspondence. Clement's literary activity may also be reasonably upheld on the ground that a mass of fictitious writing had been foisted on his name by the middle of the next century. This could hardly have been done, if he had written nothing. It would seem then quite safe to accept the tradition that Clement the third Bishop of Rome wrote the Epistle that bears his name.

We have then in this book one of the few voices from an age, from which we would fain hear much, but which, so far as our religion is concerned, is lamentably silent. There are many unanswered questions about the period between most of the writers of the New Testament and the light that breaks in the second century. If it were not for Clement there would be more. He shows us, though the occasion of his writing is only a temporary emergency, a living picture of the Christian mind in the West thirty years after the death of St. Paul and St. Peter. And it is a most attractive one. The result of the years of peace that followed Nero's persecution has been an assimilation and co-ordination of the theology of the New Testament, and a well-defined ideal of Christian life has established itself, based on Christ's Message and Example, and bearing fruits in humility, order, reverence and love. They are the very life-blood that flows from soul to soul in the Christian Church. The "gentleness and serenity of Clement" (Bishop Lightfoot) shine forth in words like these, "It is better for you to be found little in the flock of Christ, and to have your name on God's roll, than to be had in exceeding honour and yet be cast out from the hope of Him," (lxvii.), or "There is nothing coarse or arrogant in love. Love hath no divisions, love maketh no seditions, love doeth all things in concord" (xlix.).

And so far as external things are concerned it is from

Clement that we get our clearest glimpse into the organization and mutual relations of the early Christian Churches. It is slight and baffling perhaps, but it is almost our only authority outside the New Testament for the government of the Church before the development of the monarchical episcopate, and for the content of Christian teaching at the end of the first century.

A very brief and condensed summary will help us to grasp the scope of the Epistle—

(i.-xxii.) The Church of God which sojourneth in Rome salutes the Church of God which sojourneth in Corinth. Recent calamities have delayed the expression of our horror at this detestable and unholy sedition. Envy and ill-will always bring pain, as is shown by the lives of Cain, Jacob, Moses, Dathan and Abiram, and David. They caused the martyrdom of Peter and Paul and the other martyrs. We must repent, as men did at the words of Noah and Jonah. Obedience, faith, love and humility, are the marks of a Christian. Humility is the lesson of Christ, and also of the saints from Abraham to David. The changeless order of nature proclaims God's love of order, which requires us to honour and obey rulers and elders.

(xxiii.-xxxi.) On this path alone we shall reach the resurrection of the body, the result of an orderly progress like that of the natural world. The patriarchs were blest through their faith, and we can be justified only by faith. Yet we must add works to faith, like the angels, confident in the help of Jesus Christ to sustain our weakness. Order is the first principle of every society; e.g. an army, or the human body. The Mosaic Law assigned their own duties to priest, Levite, and layman. So under the Christian law the ministry is appointed by God. Jesus Christ, sent forth by God, appointed the Apostles; they in turn appointed their converts to be bishops and deacons unto them that should be-

lieve; and being divinely warned that strife would arise over the bishop's office, they provided for a continuous succession.

(xxiii.-lviii.) But you have broken the law of love as well as the law of order. You have sinned in deposing faithful and duly ordained men. You, God's children, have persecuted His officers. In the Bible the righteous were persecuted by the ungodly, but now by members of the Church, which is one Body. When St. Paul rebuked you, at least your parties followed apostles, whereas now one or two individuals misguide you. Be penitent, and seek the grace of love, harden not your hearts like Pharaoh. Let the offenders copy the humility of Moses and of pagan heroes, submit to the presbyters and receive chastisement.

(lix.-lxi.) We pray for God's elect, for inward light, pardon and cleansing, for the needy, for the conversion of the Gentiles, for peace, for deliverance from our persecutors, for obedience to rulers, for our rulers and governors, that they may govern in accordance with God's will in peace and gentleness. We offer praise to God the Father "through Jesus Christ, the High Priest and Keeper of our souls".

(lxi.-lxv.) We have gladly unfolded the essence of the Christian life to men who have studied the works of God. Submit to authority and give us joy. Send back Claudius Ephebus, Valerius Bito, and Fortunatus, who carry this, with good news. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and all men.

An examination of the theology of the Epistle reveals a fusion and co-ordination of the main streams of Christian teaching in the New Testament, with the exception of the mysticism of St. John, whose writings were perhaps not yet circulated. It contains nothing novel or original, but it assimilates the types of teaching of St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews. It is noted by Lightfoot that in co-ordinating the claims of the "faith" of

St. Paul with the "works" of St. James the writer fails to sound the depths of the Pauline doctrine of the central and fundamental place of faith. It is placed side by side with "hospitality" as a condition of salvation. This effort to co-ordinate and combine disposes of the once fashionable theory that the developed Christianity of the second century was a fusion of the result of bitter party conflicts between the followers of St. Paul and St. Peter.

Clement teaches that our Lord spoke through the Spirit in the Old Testament, that He was sent forth from God, that He is "the sceptre of the majesty of God," and "shows the face of God as in a mirror"; He came to be our pattern, and shed His blood for our salvation, giving "His flesh for our flesh, and His life for our lives": He is risen from the dead, and become "the High Priest of our offerings," and through Him we have access to the Father.

The Holy Spirit "spake by the prophets," and is now poured out on the Church, and the writer regards his work as inspired by Him.

When he writes: "Have we not one God and one Christ, and one spirit of grace that was shed upon us?" and "as God liveth and the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit, who are the faith and hope of the elect" we realize that Clement lives in an atmosphere of Trinitarian doctrine.

With regard to the New Testament the Epistle shows that 1 Corinthians and Hebrews and Romans were well known in the Western Church, and probably Acts, The Pastoral Epistles, James and 1 Peter. But the New Testament writings were not yet raised to the level of the Canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament.

Interesting questions arise in the study of Clement as to his use of our first three Gospels. His quotations are not numerous and they are verbally inexact, and we should like

to know in what state the Gospel material reached the Church of his day. Bishop Lightfoot supposes that he quoted from memory, while others think he used a Gospel distinct from our Gospels. Dr. Sanday suggests that Clement may have been in possession of a Harmony of the Gospels, similar to that afterwards produced by Tatian, that had been put together for catechetical purposes. It should anyway be noted that Clement names no author of a Gospel, but introduces his quotations with "Remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which he said" (xiii. 1) and "Remember the words of our Lord Jesus".[1] It may be said that Clement's references authenticate the matter of the Gospels, even if they suggest the possibility that it was differently arranged in the version that he used, for he quotes nothing that is not in our Gospels (see Sanday, *Inspiration*, p. 300).

But it is on the problem of the development of the Christian ministry that Clement throws most light. Our short summary clearly shows that he taught the Divine origin of the ministry, and the succession ordained by the apostles. The very core of the trouble at Corinth was an interference with properly ordained presbyters. But the Epistle makes no distinction between "presbyters" and "bishops," they are "different aspects of the same office" as yet. Neither is there any distinction suggested in the New Testament references to these same offices (Acts xx. 17; 1 Peter v. 1, 2; 1 Timothy iii. 1-7; and Titus i. 5-7). In a few years the distinction is very pronounced, as we shall see in the Ignatian Epistles. But at any rate, whatever temporary or permanent authority the presiding "bishop" at Rome or Corinth had acquired, and this we are not told—he did not differ in actual status from his brother "presbyters" or "bishops". It is probable that if there had been a

[1] Cf. Acts xx. 35.

"bishop" in the later sense at Corinth, his authority would have been dwelt on in the Epistle (cf. Lightfoot, *Philippians*, p. 97).

Clement's position at Rome therefore must have been one rather of personality than of office, and we must not regard him in the light of a bishop of later days. The Corinthian trouble may be said to have been a signal of danger, and a warning that it would not be well with the Church if authority was not definitely centralized in a line of officials. And such inter-communication between Churches as the Epistle itself shows to have existed no doubt led to the centralization of the authority of Churches in individuals, who were regarded as representatives.

The position of the See of Rome at this time is clear from the Epistle. It was in no sense supreme, but its place in the imperial city and its apostolic prestige were already leading it, even when no appeal was made to it, to attempt to act for the peace of the Church as a whole.

The mention of the Book of Judith (lv.) is the earliest reference extant to that book, and the statement that St. Paul "taught righteousness to the whole world" and "reached the furthest bounds of the west" is the ground of the supposition that after his first imprisonment the apostle fulfilled the desire expressed in Romans xv. 24 and made a missionary journey to Spain. It has even been thought that Britain was meant.

(lix.-lxiv) The prayer which concludes the Epistle seems to take us into the sacred precincts of the Eucharistic service of the early Roman Church. It resembles closely in the character and order of its petitions—both the *Shemoneh Esreh* of the Jewish Synagogue Prayer Book, and the language of the early Christian liturgies. "Save those in tribulation; have mercy on the humble; lift up the fallen; show thyself unto the needy; heal the ungodly; convert

the wanderers of Thy people; feed the hungry; release our prisoners; raise up the weak; comfort the faint-hearted," are typical phrases, which appear often in such liturgies, and express in perfect simplicity the charity of the Church of all ages. This prayer then is most valuable; it shows us the heart of the Church of Clement's day beating then as it does now.

The Epistle is preserved in the great fifth century Codex Alexandrinus originally including the whole Bible, in Constantinopolitanus, a Greek MS. discovered by Bryennius, now at Jerusalem and published in 1875, and it is found also in Syriac, Coptic, and Latin versions of great antiquity.

A HOMILY BY AN UNKNOWN WRITER.

("*The Second Epistle of Clement.*")

THE writing which follows the Epistle of Clement in the MSS. does not seem to have been regarded as Clement's by the earliest authorities, and it was considered doubtful by Eusebius. It is in reality not an epistle but a homily, and seems to have been written at Corinth for a Christian congregation quite early, probably between A.D. 120 and 140. As such it was preserved and no doubt publicly read, as was the custom of the Church at Corinth. We know nothing of the author, except that he describes himself as "an utter sinner, and not yet escaped from temptation, but still being amidst the engines of the devil, who does his diligence to follow after righteousness, that he may prevail so far at least as to come near to it, while he fears the judgment to come" (xviii.).

He gives us a plain and sincere exposition of Christian morality, based on the Divinity of Christ, the debt we owe Him, and the certainty of His Return to judge the quick and dead. Deeds not profession, the choice between two masters, the contention for the Crown, Repentance, Purity, Singleness of Mind, the Spiritual Church in the bodies of the redeemed, prayer and almsgiving, the responsibility of the old for the young, and the assurance of those "who are contending in the lists of a living God" are his chief subjects of exhortation. To him Christ is God, the Judge of quick and dead, our Salvation, the Lord, the "eternal male," in union with Whom the Church is the female; He is the

Prince of Immortality, who manifests the truth and the heavenly life.

He seems most concerned to warn his hearers against heretics who deny the Resurrection and the Judgment: they must have been Gnostics of an early type.

He quotes freely from the Old Testament, and more freely still from the words of Christ as handed down to us in the Synoptic Gospels. There are also quotations from St. Paul's Epistles. Three quotations, which apparently come from the Gospel of the Egyptians,[1] seems to show that he regarded it as of sound authority. This is a point of considerable importance in its bearing on the Canon of the New Testament. It will be interesting to give these quotations:—

(i) *The Lord said*, Though ye be gathered together with Me in My bosom, and do not my commandments, I will cast you away and will say unto you, Depart from Me, I know not whence ye are, ye workers of iniquity (iv.).

(ii) *The Lord saith*, Ye shall be as lambs in the midst of wolves. But Peter answered and said unto Him, what then if the wolves should tear the lambs? Jesus said unto Peter, Let not the lambs fear the wolves after they are dead: and ye also, fear ye not them that kill you and are not able to do anything to you; but fear him that after ye are dead hath power over soul and body, to cast them into the gehenna of fire (v.).

(iii) *The Lord Himself, being asked by a certain person when His Kingdom should come, said*, When the two shall be one, and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female, neither male nor female (xii.).

In the first and second we have amplifications of sayings

[1] See Moffatt (*Dictionary of Apostolic Church*, i. p. 495). First quotation also in Clement, Strom. iii. 13, 92 as from Gospel of Egyptians. "Possible but hazardous to identify the others" as from the same source.

that occur in our Gospels, which are not out of character with our Lord's teaching. The third we could hardly admit to ring true. It is the sort of mysterious statement, of which there are many in the fragments of the apocryphal Gospels, which is quite alien to Christ's style and manner, as presented by the Synoptists, and St. John's representation, though different from theirs, is not therefore more akin to this. Our writer explains the saying to mean (*a*) perfect sincerity between man and man. (*b*) The harmony of outward expression and inward spirit, i.e. soul and body. (*c*) The innocence of perfect purity between the sexes.

If he is right in his exegesis, possibly some mystic thinker constructed the enigma as a condensed expression of Christ's teaching on truthfulness, sincerity, and purity.

In chapter xiv. there is a passage with a Platonic ring about it. We are to act as belonging to "the first Church, which is spiritual, which was created before the sun and moon". "God made male and female" means that Christ and His Church were created together. And this spiritual Church was manifested "in the flesh of Christ," i.e. in the Incarnation—"thereby showing us, that if any of us guard her in the flesh and defile her not, he shall receive her again in the Holy Spirit; for this flesh is the counterpart and copy of spirit".

In a word, by our union with Christ we are called to keep our bodies pure: they are the outward symbols of our spiritual life, as Christ's perfect humanity was of His: "So excellent" he says "is the life and immortality which this flesh can receive as its portion, if the Holy Spirit be joined to it" (xiv.).

This early Christian sermon then, though it is disconnected and somewhat trite in its teaching, has many points of interest, and especially the interest that is aroused by faith and earnestness.

THE EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS.

Eusebius says that in the time of Trajan, Ignatius the second bishop of Antioch was, according to the tradition, "sent away from Syria to Rome, and was cast as food to wild beasts on account of his testimony to Christ" (Eusebius H. E., iii. 36). He tells us that on his way through Asia he addressed the Churches, cautioning them against heresies, and attested the apostolic teaching by seven letters. Of these the first four were written at Smyrna, the see of Polycarp, to the Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome, and the other three from Troas, where he next rested, to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Polycarp.

There is no reason to doubt that our Epistles are the identical writings mentioned by Eusebius, and from which he quotes. It would be difficult to imagine letters more full of the personality of their writer, and of the circumstances under which they were written.

Ignatius then having been informed against and condemned at Antioch was put in the custody of ten Roman soldiers, whom he calls "leopards, who only wax worse when they are kindly treated" (Rom. v.). It was their business to convey prisoners to Rome, and apparently they had to wait at various places on the way. On reaching the Lycus valley they took the Northern road to Smyrna, and there a long delay enabled Ignatius to receive delegates from the Churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, and the Trallians, which all lay south-east of Smyrna. To them he gave letters for their respective Churches, and he also wrote the

Roman Epistle, deprecating any effort to save him from martyrdom in the amphitheatre. On reaching Troas he wrote to Philadelphia, and, as was natural, to Polycarp, and to the brethren at Smyrna, who had not despised or been ashamed of his bonds (*Smyrnæans*, ii.).

Ignatius calls himself "Theophorus". This is probably a name that he assumed at baptism. Its meaning is "God-bearer," but it was probably used as a mere name.

Apart from the letters we know nothing certain about Ignatius. The tradition that his bones were buried at Antioch suggests the possibility that he was in some way saved from martyrdom. But it is more probable that he perished in the amphitheatre according to his own passionate desire. But it may be said that there is no early Christian writer we know better. The day of tragedy reveals the personality of the man. His short sentences ring out with simple reality. His figures of speech, sometimes wild and strained, show the colour of his inner passion. The two or three main themes on which he harps, the glory of martyrdom, the sure foundation of the apostolic tradition, the dangerous heresies that are springing up in Asia, the necessity of clinging to the central ministry of the Church as the one bulwark of unity, expressed with an intense humility if with an assured authority, give a characteristic picture of the soul of an early Christian bishop, that stands out plain and clear. As we know St. Paul, so we know Ignatius. And as through St. Paul's unstudied letters we have mirrored the inner tendencies of the upspringing Christian life, so through the mirror of Ignatius we can form an idea of its growth, and the manner in which it was adapting itself to the conditions of struggle in a later age.

It would be wearisome to go through each Epistle in detail. As was natural, Ignatius had much the same message to give to each Church to which he wrote. It will

perhaps be most helpful here to group what he has to tell us of himself and the Church of his time under the heads of: (i) His own desire of martyrdom; (ii) His faith and doctrine, and the nature of the new heresies; (iii) His conception of Church Organization and the Christian Ministry.

(i) As has been well said—"His letters written in an abrupt and nervous style, overloaded with metaphors, incoherent, popular, and lacking every Hellenic grace, are yet endowed with such pathetic faith, and such passionate joy in martyrdom, with such overwhelming love of Christ, that they are one of the finest expressions of the Christianity of the second century" (Batiffol, *Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, i. 603). It was in the expectation of martyrdom that he could say "Now am I beginning to be a disciple". It was the sure road to Christ, clearly marked and easier to tread than the streets of Antioch. So he could beseech the Romans to desist from their attempts to rescue him—"Do not hinder me from living; do not desire my death. . . . Suffer me to receive the pure light. When I am come thither, then shall I be a man. Permit me to be an imitator of the Passion of my God." There is "joy" in his prospect—"May I have joy of the beasts that have been prepared for me; and I pray that I may find them prompt; nay I will entice them, that they may devour me promptly, not as they have done to some, refusing to touch them through fear. Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushings of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me. Only be it mine to attain unto Jesus Christ" (Romans v. and vi.). Such sayings are typical of the rapture with which he looks forward in all the Epistles to his death at Rome.

(ii) The teaching of Ignatius is definitely based on a written Gospel and on the Old Testament. The Gospel is

"as the flesh of Jesus Christ—yea, and we love the prophets also" (*Philad.* v. 1). He tells how certain heretics say, "If I find it not in the charters (τὰ ἀρχαῖα) I believe it not in the Gospel," and how they answer "That is the question," when he says "So it is written" (*Phil.* viii. 2). His Gospel contains the Incarnation, the Passion and the Resurrection, and fulfils prophecy (ix. 2).

"Ignatius," says Batiffol, "certainly knows the synoptic tradition, for there are clear traces of his dependence on Matthew (*Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, i. 601), but he knows other records, e.g. 'I am not an unembodied demon' (*Sm.* iii. 2), and the Nativity Star (*Eph.* xix. 2)."

To Ignatius, Christ is the revelation of the Father in time, He comes forth "from the silence of God" (*Eph.* vii. 2). Up to the Incarnation He was invisible and impassible (*Polyc.* iii. 2). Theology has not yet learned to formulate His eternal generation, only His eternal pre-existence. As an opponent of the prevailing Docetism Ignatius dwells on Christ's real Humanity, conceived of Mary, born, baptized, subject to human conditions, crucified, and raised from the dead (*Trall.* ix. 1, 2). Yet the stress is also laid on His spiritual nature, which is the Godhead in the flesh. It is the Godhead of the Son, distinct from the Father. So he speaks (*Eph. Intr.*) of "the will of the Father, and of Jesus Christ our God"—(cf. also *Eph.* xviii. 2, *Rom. Insc.* and iii. 3). Christ, as the "Logos" or Eternal Word, came to teach us about the Father, but it was by His Death and Resurrection that He won immortality for us. The Cross stands to Clement, as it did to St. Paul, for eternal life.

The Spirit is ranked with the Father and Son, as in the baptismal formula (*Mag.* xiii. 2). In a picturesque passage (*Eph.* ix. 1) the believers are the stones of a building, the Cross of Jesus Christ the machine by which they are hoisted

up, the Father the builder, and the Holy Spirit the rope. And the Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus Christ, only distinguishable from Him by the difference of manifestation in time. It is the life of Christ He brings, for Christ is in all believers, and the Church is united to Christ, even as the Father is to the Son (*Eph.* v. 1 ; xv. 3).

In such statements it would be wrong to expect theological exactness. Ignatius pours forth his soul's belief, not a studied creed—as Professor Sanday says: "The striking thing about him is the way in which he seems to anticipate the spirit of the later theology ; the way in which he singles out as central the points which it made central, and the just balance and proportion which he observes between them" (*Christologies Ancient and Modern*, p. 10).

The heretics against whom Ignatius fulminates are most in evidence at Smyrna; "the wild beasts in human form" are at war with the rulers of the Church, and have separated themselves. They are "judaizers"; that is to say, they reject the idea of Christian grace (*Mag.* viii. 1); and their doctrinal error is docetic, i.e. they whittle away the real Humanity of our Lord. This form of heresy afterwards grew to a great height. It is not one that we are in danger of at the present day.

(iii) To Ignatius the Church is an aggregation of City-communities. Each is governed by a bishop, who presides over a body of presbyters, under whom are the deacons. The bishop is the visible centre of unity, God the invisible Bishop is behind him (*Mag.* iii. 1, 2). Even if he be young he is to be obeyed (*ib.* iii. 1). No Church functions are to be done without him : he alone can assure the validity of Baptism and the Eucharist (*Smyrn.* viii. 1, 2). Marriages should be authorized by him (*Polyc.* v. 2). The presbyters are to the bishop as the strings to a lyre (*Eph.* iv. 1). The language of Ignatius leads us to argue that in his day

an episcopate of this type was to be found everywhere, even "in the farthest parts of the earth" (*Eph.* iii. 2). We are not told the manner of the bishop's appointment. The fact that delegates from Smyrna and Philadelphia are to be elected by the community proves nothing regarding the appointment of a bishop. Ignatius reminds the Bishop of Philadelphia that the office he has received is one "which pertains to the common weal, not of himself or through men, nor yet for vain glory, but in the love of God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Philad.* i.).

It is the standing problem of the early Church how so great a change could have been brought about in so short a time: for, as we have seen, the bishop in Clement's day seems to have been but one of the presbyters. Either we are inclined to argue too much from what Clement omits to say, or Ignatius in his burning faith in a newly developed system expressed what he considered the ideal road to unity as if it had already reached the actuality which it was destined to attain.

Baptism according to Ignatius' teaching, as we have seen, is "under the bishop," and is likened to the soldiers' compact (*Polyc.* vi. 2). And the Eucharist is the outward symbol of unity—"breaking one bread, which is the medicine of immortality, and the antidote that we should not die, but live for ever in Jesus Christ" (*Eph.* xx. 2). Ignatius speaks also of "the *one* Eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup unto union in his blood" (*Philad.* iv.). And the heretics are stamped as "abstaining from Eucharist and prayer, because they allow not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (*Smyrn.* vi. 2).

Ignatius recommends Polycarp to hold more frequent meetings (συναγωγαί): and dwells on the responsibility of each Church to provide for widows, orphans, prisoners, and others that are in need (*Smyrn.* vi. 2 and xiii. 1).

The "spiritual gifts" of St. Paul's time are not mentioned by Ignatius. "Prophecy" has disappeared: except that the bishop has the sole right to speak in the power of the spirit.

NOTE.—The seven letters were interpolated, and increased to the number of thirteen, probably in the fifth century. They were first printed in 1498, and controversies raged over them until the final authenticating of the seven letters (mentioned by Eusebius) by Zahn 1873, Funk 1883, and Lightfoot. Canon Cureton published *Ephesians*, *Magnesians*, and *Romans* in 1845 from a Syriac version; and it was held for some time that these alone were genuine: but they are now proved by Lightfoot and Harnack to be only an excerpt from the seven. We have all the seven except *Romans* in the Codex Laurentianus (eleventh century), and the whole seven in an Armenian version.

THE EPISTLE OF POLYCARP TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

This Epistle is closely connected with the Ignatian Epistles: as contemporary documents they stand or fall together. For it claims to be an answer to a letter from Philippi asking Polycarp to pass on any letters from Ignatius he may have, and it dwells (I. and IX.) on the fact that Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus had recently been welcomed on their way by the Philippians. Ignatius, too, had charged them, as he had the Smyrnaeans and Philadelphians, to send a letter of congratulation to the Church of Antioch on the cessation of persecution (*Smyrn.* xi., *Polyc.* vii., *Philad.* x.). And Polycarp naturally asks for news of Ignatius from a church that is further on the road to Rome.

In this Epistle Polycarp reveals himself as an earnest, sober-minded apostolic man. He is well acquainted with the relations of the Philippians with St. Paul. He dwells mainly on the moral side of Christianity. He enjoins submission to the presbyters and deacons, and the ideals of the latter are to be those of the same officers in the Pastoral Epistles. He expresses doctrinal truth usually in the exact words of the New Testament, with which he shows great familiarity. He speaks with the authority we should expect from one who had known the Apostolic circle, and had probably been given his charge by St. John himself. He speaks as one who had long been justly regarded as the centre of the undiluted apostolic tradition. The sin of an

erring member who had been a presbyter pains him, as it would have pained St. Paul.

The Epistle consists of fourteen paragraphs, which may be summarized as follows:—

Title. Polycarp and the presbyters that are with him unto the Church of God which sojourneth at Philippi: mercy unto you and peace from God Almighty and Jesus Christ our Saviour be multiplied.

(i) I was glad you escorted the followers of the true Love in their bonds, and that your faith still bears fruit unto Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, and rose again.

(ii) Serve God in fear and truth. Serve the Risen Lord, and God will raise you too. Remember His precepts about forgiveness and humility.

(iii) It is at your invitation I write. I am no St. Paul, who taught you and wrote to you. Study his Epistle and you will be built up in faith, hope and love.

(iv) Beware of avarice. Let the women be virtuous: especially the widows, who are "God's Altar, on which all sacrifices are carefully inspected".

(v) The deacons must be blameless, the young men pure. Submit to the presbyters and deacons.

(vi) The presbyters must be compassionate, seeking straying sheep, visiting the sick, just, not hasty or avaricious. All must be forgiving and zealous for good.

(vii) Heresy about Christ is of the devil; and "He who perverteth the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts, and saith that there is neither resurrection nor judgment, is the first-born of Satan". Forsake novelties, and "turn to the Word that was delivered unto us from the beginning".

(viii) Let us hold fast to Christ who bare our sins, that we might live in Him, and follow His example.

(ix) Imitate Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus, and above all Paul and the rest of the Apostles.

(x) Stand fast in faith, love, and gentleness. Do good. Be subject one to another. Teach all men your ideal of soberness.

(xi) I grieved at the fall of Valens and his wife. Beware of covetousness. You were Paul's boast, how sad that any of you should fall! Restore them for the sake of your whole body.

(xii) You know the Scriptures well. Better than I do. Be then forgiving. God the Father, and the Eternal High Priest bless you. Pray for the saints, for kings and princes, and for your persecutors.

(xiii) I will see that your letters are sent to Syria, as you ask. I send you the letters of Ignatius. Tell me anything you know of him.

(xiv) I send this by Crescens, whom I commend to you. I shall also commend his sister to you later. Fare ye well in the Lord Jesus Christ in grace, ye and all yours. Amen.

The picture of the quiet evangelical life of the early Church presented in this document is of course of great interest in itself. But it is of even more value as authenticating the Epistles of Ignatius. "If it be accepted, they cannot be rejected; if it be rejected, they lack their best and oldest witness."[1] But it is authenticated by Irenaeus, who was Polycarp's own pupil, in his Epistle to Florinus, which is quoted by Eusebius.[2] The expression in vii, "firstborn of Satan," which was traditionally used by Polycarp in referring to the heresiarch Marcion at Rome somewhere about A.D. 154, is regarded by some as a sign of a later date: but Lightfoot has proved that the passage could not apply to the followers of Marcion, but only to the Asiatic Gnostics of earlier days. It is not improbable that Polycarp often

[1] Cruttwell, *Literary History of Early Christianity*, i. 98.
[2] Euseb., H. E. v. 20.

applied the same words to heretics all through his long life: so that we should concur with the unanimous verdict of antiquity in regarding the Epistle of Polycarp as a genuine writing by him, dispatched shortly after the departure of Ignatius from Smyrna.

THE MARTYRDOM OF POLYCARP.

(*The Epistle of the Smyrnaeans.*)

The account of Polycarp's martyrdom is given in a letter claiming to be written by the Church of Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium, shortly after it occurred. To the letter proper are appended three paragraphs comprizing chapters xxi. and xxii. The authentidty of the main body of the letter is as well supported as that of any ancient document. Irenaeus, the pupil of Polycarp, tells us that the martyrdom took place: the document has great similarity to the letter of the Gallican Churches (A.D. 177). And Eusebius incorporates the greater part of it into his history (iv. 15), stating that "it was handed down in writings still extant". The account of the miraculous dove which flew out with the martyr's blood when he was pierced in the flames was once thought to stamp it as a later writing. But Lightfoot has shown that this marvel is probably the addition of a certain Pionius who wrote a life of Polycarp much later than the time of Eusebius, which includes this and similar miracles. As Eusebius does not mention the dove, and as one of the concluding paragraphs states that "Pionius" had made the copy, having been told by Polycarp in a vision where to find the last transcription, Lightfoot's explanation is generally accepted. There is of course no improbability that the story of the dove was told immediately after the martyrdom. Indeed that would seem psychologically to have been the most likely. It is also possible that the word "dove" in the Greek is an unintentional blunder, as

one or two words have been suggested, which a very slight change would transform into περιστέρα (dove).

The first additional paragraph and the opening of the Epistle are a copy of the beginning and end of St. Clement's Epistle. Some of their historical statements are independently confirmed, and they may therefore be regarded as part of the original letter.

The second, which commends the letter to its readers, may have been added at Philomelium: the third claims to be added by Pionius, who, as we have seen, transcribed the Epistle in the fifth century.

We may therefore place full confidence in this simple account of Polycarp's martyrdom, which heads the roll, after the account of the death of Stephen, in the long and varied story of Christian martyrology.

Before we consider it let us proceed to set down what we know of Polycarp himself. As he says in his defence he had been eighty-six years a Christian, it is reasonable to suppose that he had been one all his life. He died in A.D. 156; therefore he was born in A.D. 69 or 70. This was about the time when the Church of Jerusalem moved to Pella, and shortly after to Asia Minor, when Ephesus became its headquarters. There gathered, according to Papias, St. John, St. Philip, St. Andrew, Aristion, and John the Elder, and instructed a circle of pupils, until St. John alone was left.[1] Polycarp thus in his youth drank at the fountain head of apostolic truth, and none of the perversions suggested afterwards by heretical minds could shake him from the simple Gospel he had originally been taught. He was appointed Bishop of Smyrna by Apostles (Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* iii. 3, 4) and therefore held office for about fifty years. We have seen his relations with Ignatius on his last journey. Ignatius' letter to him reflects something of his character.

[1] See page 56.

His "godly mind is grounded on an immovable rock". Ignatius knows "the fervour of his sincerity," and warns him that "the season requires him, as pilots require wind, or as a storm-tossed mariner a haven, that it may attain unto God," and bids him to stand firm "like an anvil when it is smitten" "for it is the part of a great athlete to receive blows and to be victorious". And Polycarp had persevered for some fifty years in his charge, until at last he remained as a monument of the past age, spreading to the end his memories of the apostolic circle, like a second St. John, whose pupil he had been, handing on the tradition to generations to come. And at last, as the leading figure in the Eastern Church, he was called "to crown a good life with a fair death".

Polycarp visited Rome towards the end of his life to discuss with Anicetus the difference between the Eastern and the Western Church as to the day on which Easter should be observed. The East followed the Jewish custom, observing the 14th Nisan; the West for some fifty years had kept Friday as a memorial of the Passion, and Sunday of the Resurrection. On this occasion he celebrated the Eucharist in the place of Anicetus.

It was probably soon after his return that the persecution broke out. The young Germanicus, in contempt of all the proconsul's persuasion to give way, had nobly "dragged the wild-beast to him". The coward Quintus had failed in his witness. Polycarp was now clamoured for by the heathen populace. He withdrew to a farm and passed his time in prayer. There he had a dream; his pillow seemed burning with fire, and he cried "It must needs be that I shall be burned alive". Taking refuge at another farm, one of the farm-lads betrayed his hiding-place under torture. It was on a Friday at supper-time that the police and horsemen took him. He gave them food and drink and only

asked the boon of an hour for prayer. Then they set him on an ass and brought him into Smyrna. Herod, the Superintendent of Police, met him with the question—"What harm is there in saying Cæsar is Lord and offering incense, and saving thyself"? Polycarp made no reply. So he was taken to the stadium, and as he entered it a voice was heard—"Be strong, Polycarp, and play the man". Called on amid the uproar to repent and cry "Away with the atheists," he cast his eyes on the faces of the crowd, waved his hand towards them and exclaimed "Away with the atheists". "Revile the Christ and I will release you," said the magistrate—and Polycarp made the memorable answer: "Fourscore and six years have I been His servant, and He hath done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my King, Who saved me"? He offered to defend himself at a fit time and place before the authorities, but not before the people. He was threatened with the beasts and then with the fire: "Thou threatenest," he said, "that fire which burneth for a season and after a while is quenched: for thou art ignorant of the fire of the future judgment and eternal punishment, which is reserved for the ungodly". Then the proconsul sent his herald to proclaim thrice: "Polycarp hath confessed himself to be a Christian". The populace called for the lion. But the sports were over. So Polycarp was condemned to the fire, and his dream fulfilled. The crowd collected timber and faggots from baths and workshops. When the pile was ready he removed his garments. It was noticed that he fumbled with his shoes, for he had never been used to taking them off himself, the faithful being accustomed to do him such services.

At his own request he was not nailed but tied to the stake, and standing there "like a noble ram out of a great flock for an offering" he prayed—"O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ

. . . I bless Thee that Thou hast granted me this day and hour. . . . For this cause, yea and for all things I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee through the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, through Whom with Him and the Holy Spirit be glory both now and for the ages to come. Amen."

Then they lighted the fire, and marvels seemed to follow: the fire "like the sail of a vessel filled by the wind" appeared to surround Polycarp without hurting him, and a fragrant smell like frankincense was wafted from the pile. An executioner was bidden to go up and stab him: which he did, and the great stream of the martyr's blood put out the fire.

Satan persuaded Herod's father, says the letter of the Smyrnaeans, to plead with the magistrate not to give up the body "lest they should abandon the crucified one, and worship this man". How ignorantly spoken! "For Him being the Son of God we adore, but the martyrs as disciples and imitators of the Lord we cherish."

However, the proconsul had the body burned, and the Christians were able afterwards to gather up only a few charred fragments, "more valuable than precious stones and finer than refined gold," which they laid in a fitting place, where "the birthday of his martyrdom" should be annually commemorated.

We see in this simple account how innocently and naturally the veneration of relics arose in the Early Church. It sprang from one of the most deep-seated human instincts, and was an offshoot from the family-love of the children of God. It is well to remember this when we read of the strange aberrations of later days.

The Smyrnaeans (xx.) desire the Philomelians to send on the letter to more distant churches—"They that are with us salute you, and Euarestus, who wrote the letter, with his whole house."

The date of the martyrdom is appended (xxi.), "the 2nd day of the month Xanthicus, on the 7th before the Kalends of March, on a great Sabbath at the 8th hour: he was apprehended by Herodes when Philip of Tralles was high priest, in the consulship of Statius Quadratus, but in the reign of the Eternal King, Jesus Christ".

Pionius professes that he copied it from the copy of Socrates, who had copied it from that of Gaius, which was itself a transcript from the papers of Irenaeus. Polycarp, he says, revealed to him where it was, and it "was now well nigh worn out of age". We have, as we have seen, the independent account of the letter by Eusebius about a century before, or we might be inclined to discredit the special revelation which Pionius claims.

THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES.

(*The Didache.*)

THE "Teaching of the Apostles" or "The Teaching of the twelve Apostles" was discovered in 1875 by Bryennius in the Jerusalem monastery at Constantinople in a MS. of the eleventh century written by "the hand of Leo notary and sinner". This MS. also contains the *Epistle of Barnabas* and *Clement of Rome*, and three other groups of writings. We have also the first six chapters in a Latin version of the same date from a Munich MS. published in 1900.

In its sixteen short chapters we have a Church manual concerned with Christian morality and Church order. It is believed by most critics to have been written in some Christian community in Palestine between A.D. 80 and 100, though some think its date to be forty years later, and some that it originated in Egypt. Dr. Armitage Robinson holds the theory that it does not present a picture of any actual conditions at all, but that it is "a free creation" based on the New Testament. This theory will hardly commend itself to the plain man.

A brief summary will reveal best the many interesting questions raised by the book, and the light it throws on the early development of the Church. It will be noted that it is definitely divided into three parts, The Two Ways, Rules of Church Order, and an Eschatological Conclusion.

I. THE TWO WAYS.

(i) There are two ways, one of life and one of death. *The way of life:* Love God, love thy neighbour, and do as

you would be done by (Matt. xxii. 37, 39, v. 44, 46; Luke vi. 27, 28, 32, 33, 35; v. 39-42, vi. 29, 30 quoted as teaching). Blessed is the giver, woe to the receiver who does not need, he shall be confined and examined, and "shall not come out till he hath paid the last farthing" (Matt. v. 26).

(ii) Thou shalt not murder, commit adultery, act impurely, steal, deal in magic, kill by abortion or after birth, covet, perjure thyself, bear false witness, bear malice or hatred, be insincere or avaricious.

(iii) Flee from anger, lust, omen-hunting, lying, murmuring; Be meek (Matt. v. 5), and submissive in spirit in adversity.

(iv) Honour "him that speaketh to thee the word of God" (Heb. xiii. 7). Seek out the saints, avoid schism. Be generous (Ecclus. iv. 31), strict with children, considerate to slaves, sincere. "In Church thou shalt confess thy sins, and not pray with an evil conscience."

(v) *The way of death:* described by a list of sins—including murder, lust, witchcraft, treachery, pride, malice, lying, covetousness, oppression, injustice.

(vi) Beware of false leaders; abstain from meat sacrificed to idols: it is "the food of dead gods".

II. Church Order.

(vii) *Baptism:* Baptize, after reciting the above,[1] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, preferably in living, i.e. running, water, thrice, after fasting.

(viii) Fast, not with the hypocrites on 2nd and 5th days, but on 4th and 6th. Pray "as the Lord commanded in His Gospel" three times a day. (Words of Lord's prayer.)

(ix) Form of Eucharistic thanksgiving. "First, as regards

[1] ταῦτα πάντα προειπόντες.

the cup: We give Thee thanks, O our Father, for the holy vine of Thy son David, which Thou madest known unto us through thy Son Jesus: Thine is the glory for ever and ever, Amen. Then as regards the broken bread: We give Thee thanks, O our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou didst make known unto us through Thy Son Jesus; Thine is the glory for ever and ever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth unto Thy Kingdom; for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever and ever." The baptized only are to participate as the Lord directs (Matt. vii. 7).

(x) And "after ye are satisfied" thus give thanks: "We give Thee thanks, Holy Father, for Thy holy name, which thou hast made to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality, which Thou hast made known unto us through Thy Son Jesus: Thine is the glory for ever and ever. Thou, Almighty Master, didst create all things for Thy name's sake, and didst give food and drink unto men for enjoyment, that they might render thanks to Thee; but didst bestow upon us spiritual food and drink and eternal life through Thy Son. Before all things we give Thee thanks that Thou art powerful; Thine is the glory for ever and ever. Remember, Lord, Thy Church to deliver it from all evil and to perfect it in Thy love; and gather it together from the four winds—even the Church which has been sanctified—into Thy Kingdom which has been prepared for it; for Thine is the power and the glory for ever and ever. May grace come, and may this world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David. If any man is holy, let him come: if any man is not, let him repent. Maran Atha. Amen." "Permit the prophets to offer thanksgiving as much as they desire."

(xi) Only receive them that bring you the above teaching. Concerning apostles and priests. Receive the Apostle as the Lord : he may stay at the most two days, and may only take away bread, not money. Speaking in the Spirit he is above criticism. "Yet not every one that speaketh in the Spirit is a prophet, but only if he have the ways of the Lord." He is true, only if he act up to his teaching. He is not to take part in "a table" demanded "in the Spirit," nor to ask for anything for himself while in that state.

(xii) All coming in the Lord's name to be assisted to stay two or three days. If craftsmen, to be given work ; if not, a way must be found lest they should live in idleness, and trade on their religion.

(xiii) A true prophet settling with you is worthy of his food, as is also a teacher. Give the prophets all first-fruits ; they are your chief-priests.

(xiv) On the Lord's day meet, break bread, and give thanks, "first confessing your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure". No man at variance with his fellow to participate : "for this is the sacrifice spoken of by the Lord in Malachi, i. 11, 14".

(xv) "Appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons . . . for unto you they also perform the service of the prophets and teachers. Therefore despise them not ; for they are your honourable men along with the prophets and teachers."

Reprove one another ; and strictly ostracize those who do not repent.

III. Eschatological Conclusion.

Be watchful (Matt. xxv. 13, Luke xii. 35, 40). Meet often together. False prophets shall increase in the last days, and the sheep become wolves—lawlessness increasing, the world deceiver shall appear as a Son of God, and shall work signs and wonders, and reign.

This will be the testing-fire: many shall perish: they that endure "shall be saved by the Curse Himself".[1] The signs shall appear: a rift in heaven, the trumpet's voice, and the resurrection of the dead, not of all, but of the saints only in accord with Zech. xiv. 5. (Cf. Matt. xxiv. 11, 24; 10, 30; 24, 13; and Luke xxi. 12.)

The intensely Jewish character of this document, especially in the first part, is the basis of the theory that we have in it the Christian adaptation of a Jewish manual for proselytes. Its likenesses to Jewish writings are so great, and the form of its rules of Church order so suggestive of Jewish rules which they have displaced, and the eschatological ideas of the last part so similar to those in Jewish apocalypses, that it seems reasonable to conclude that there was a Jewish original of the whole book, the most drastic alterations being of course found in the specifically Christian part, that is to say, the second, which deals with Church order.

There are two exact quotations from the Old Testament (Mal. i. 11, 14, and Zech. xiv. 5), two from the New Testament (Matt. vi. 5, *sq.* and Matt. vii. 6), three references to our Lord's words and many free borrowings from both Old and New. The writer seems to have used our St. Matthew, and possibly our St. Luke, and to have been familiar with the oral tradition.

As our Latin version consists only of the first six chapters and seems to be as early as the fourth century, the question arises: Is it an abbreviation of the document, or was the extra matter added to it? The former hypothesis seems to be the likeliest: for some reason its author must have wished to present the ethical side of Christian teaching by itself—when the conditions of Church life had made the Church rules of the latter part out of date.

[1] ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταθέματος (Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1 vol., p. 224).

The Church-ministry is represented as being of a double form: there are the visiting apostles and prophets, and the resident bishop-presbyters and deacons. The latter are set apart by the congregation, but this need not mean that they are not apostolically ordained. The necessity of a rigid testing of the prophets seems to show that their authority is on the wane: but their words are still regarded as the direct message of the Holy Spirit.

We have here the first mention outside the New Testament of the worship on the Lord's Day: the account agrees with the almost contemporary account in Pliny's letter to Trajan (Pliny, *Epp.* x. 96, 97). Its central feature is "the breaking of bread" with confession of sins, and the "Hosanna to the God of David" which is no doubt the same as Pliny's "hymn to Christ as God".

The account of the Eucharist is confusing, and leaves room for varying explanations. In chapter ix. we have a rite, which is called "the Eucharist," in which there are thanksgivings for the cup first, and then for the bread, and in neither are the words of institution said. A second prayer follows "after the participants are filled," and it is not till the end of this second Eucharistic prayer that the words "if any one is holy let him come" are said, which appear in later liturgies as the invitation to communion. The most reasonable explanation seems to be that the first prayer is concerned with the primitive "Agape," or Love-Feast, and that the second belongs to the Eucharist proper, the name Eucharist being strangely applied to the whole ceremony. The form of Eucharistic thanksgiving in the Eucharist proper does not rule out a previous consecration by the words of institution: possibly it is supplied for use when the prophets, who may always "give thanks as they will," are either not present or are not moved by the Spirit to extempore thanksgiving.

Such seems to be the most reasonable explanation of one of the earliest accounts of the Church's central service. It will be noted that it is considered to be the sacrifice foretold by Malachi, but it is by no means clear in what sense the word sacrifice (*θυσία*) is here used.

The chief evidence for the early date of this document, from whatever part of the Church it came, is its testimony to the continued existence of the travelling apostolic and prophetic ministers. The local ministry is in existence, but is still subordinate to these visitors from the outside. We may note the atmosphere of suspicion that seems to be growing with regard to the latter in the repeated suggestions of possible mercenary motives. The Church at this date was therefore old enough to have begun to become the prey of hypocrites, and was beginning to learn to protect itself against them. It is evidently on the eve of a fuller organization of its settled, local ministry, which no doubt had already been reached in places more on the beaten track than the retired community for which these rules were written.

There is much common matter in the Epistle of Barnabas and in "The Teaching". The former probably used an early form of the latter. It was adapted and embodied in several later works, viz. *The Apostolic Church Ordinance* (Egypt) *circ.* A.D. 300; the *Didascalia* (Syria) *circ.* A.D. 200; the *Apostolic Constitutions and Canons*, c. vii.; and in other patristic writings.

THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS.

In this document we have an exceedingly earnest treatise on the ethical aspect of Christianity, combined with an elaborate attack upon the literal observance of the Jewish law, in which allegorical subtlety is carried to a fantastic length.

Its ascription to "The Son of Consolation" is not found in the Epistle itself: it is therefore not an apocryphal writing. But it is described as the work of Barnabas by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* ii. 20); Origen (*In Celsum.* i. 63); and Eusebius (*H. E.* vi. 14, iii. 25). The latter, however, did not regard it as canonical, though we find it following Revelation in the Codex Sinaiticus. It was therefore commonly regarded in the Church at the end of the second century as written by Barnabas, and this fact should be allowed due weight. But most scholars now agree that the contents of the Epistle could not have been written by the companion of St. Paul. "Indeed," says Bishop Lightfoot, "his language is such as to suggest that he was wholly unconnected with the Apostles" (*Apostolic Fathers*, 1 vol. ed., p. 239). The arguments of Hefele which support this conclusion are stated in the Dictionary of Christian Biography, and are still generally accepted. It is probable that the writer's name was Barnabas, and if the Epistle emanated as is likely from Alexandria, with which city St. Barnabas traditionally was associated,[1] we have a ready explanation of its ascription to him.

[1] Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1 vol., p. 239.

With regard to its date. In xvi. 4 it alludes to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, therefore it was later than A.D. 70. Lightfoot considers that if it had been written after A.D. 132, the writer would necessarily have referred to the second siege under Hadrian. Any closer determination of its date must rest on our interpretation of the writer's quotation of Daniel vii. 7, 8 and 24 in chapter iv. The fourth beast, "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly," is of course the Roman Empire, and its ten horns the first ten Emperors. Then follows in the writer's rendering: "And from these (arose) a little horn an excrescence, and how that it abased under one three of the great horns".[1] This of course suggests many possible interpretations. Lightfoot makes the tenth horn to be Vespasian, and the three that are to be abased the association of Vespasian with his two sons Titus and Domitian, "So close a connexion of three in one was never seen in the history of the Empire, until a date too late to enter into consideration". He considers "the little horn" to be Anti-Christ, the person of Nero, who was commonly expected to be about to return. If this be received the date would be between A.D. 70 and 79. The writer stands before the curtain of the future, about to arise on "the last offence," which he believes is to sweep away the Flavian dynasty. We have thus a companion document to the Apocalypse, a picture of the mind of the Church between the two first persecutions, occupied in "investigating deeply concerning the present, and searching out the things that have power to save us".

The contents of the Epistle reveal an extraordinarily interesting view of the kind of attitude of the Church towards Judaism that succeeded that of St. Paul. Its bitterness and contempt for the Jewish polity must have been stirred by

[1] καὶ ὡς ἐταπείνωσεν ὑφ' ἓν τρία τῶν μεγάλων κεράτων (Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1 vol., p. 246).

real danger of a relapse to Judaism among Christians. Its obvious narrowness throws into strong relief the comprehension and philosophy of religious evolution taught by St. Paul. To him "the law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," a preparatory discipline, a preparation for the spiritual on the lower place of material ordinances, it is true, but yet a providential and necessary preparation. For him the Old Covenant was real and solid as long as it lasted, only "in the fulness of time" was it called to disappear, when that which is perfect had come. Historically, providentially, like fruit from a flower, the New Covenant took the place of the Old. The writer of Barnabas had not the type of mind to envisage this. He was face to face with controversialists who demanded how the Law once given by God could ever be annulled, how the Covenant confirmed by an oath to the Jewish race could be open to the entrance of the races without the Law. How could he, without that Pauline breadth of view and historical insight, place Christianity triumphantly above Judiasm? With the boldness of a weak thinker he constructed a thesis, which contended that the Jews had never understood their own religion, that they had all along been deceived "by an evil angel" in imagining that God really meant them to perform rites and to submit to ordinances of a material character. God's intention had always been to put before them the spiritual realities of the New Covenant. If their teachers had had eyes to see they would have recognized Christ all through the Law. But they were blind, and understood God's beautiful allegories in grossly material ways. This position of the writer of the Epistle entailed upon him the studied transformation of the simplest enactments into far-fetched allegories. He is pursued through his pages by the Nemesis of the allegorizing theory that his polemic had adopted. The scapegoat exists solely as a type of Jesus (vii.): the offering of an heifer with

scarlet wool on a tree and hyssop, means "that the kingdom of Jesus is on the cross, and that they who set their hope in Him shall live for ever". And more curiously still when Abraham circumcized 318 men [Greek numerals TIH], "in the number 18 I stands for 10, H for 8, Here thou hast Jesus (ΙΗΣΟΥΣ). And because the Cross in the T was to have grace, he saith also three hundred. So he revealeth Jesus in the two letters, and in the remaining one the Cross" (ix. 8). With more effect he quotes the prophetic passages which subordinate sacrifice and ritual and fasts and feasts to morality, though he argues that when they speak of "a circumcision of the heart" they imply the abolition of the bodily ordinance. So he sweeps away the dearest idols of the Jewish Church—Circumcision, the Sabbath, and even the material Temple, the centre of their national and religious life—as the mistakes of men misled by deceit, and blind to the real intention of God, who was attempting to teach them the truth.

But we are all more right in our affirmations than in our negations, and on the positive side of morality Barnabas speaks truly and sincerely. He is full "of the great and overflowing joy" of the Early Church conscious of its "spiritual gift". He counsels a rigid and careful separation from evil society. He felicitously names evil "The Black One," and embodies in his work much of the simple and lofty instruction of "The two ways" of the Didache. His "spiritual temple," which I will quote, is a passage that shows him at his best.

"Let us enquire whether there be any temple of God. There is; in the place where He Himself undertakes to make and finish it. For it is written: And it shall come to pass, when the week is being accomplished, the temple of God shall be built gloriously in the name of the Lord. I find then that there is a temple. How then shall it be built in the name

of the Lord? Understand ye. Before we believed in God, the abode of our heart was corrupt and weak, a temple truly built by hands; for it was full of idolatry, and was a house of demons, because we did whatever was contrary to God. But it shall be built in the name of the Lord. Give heed then that the temple may be built gloriously. How? Understand ye. By receiving the remission of our sins and hoping on the Name we became new, created afresh from the beginning. Wherefore God dwelleth truly in our habitation within us. How? The word of His faith, the calling of His promise, the wisdom of the ordinances, the commandments of the teaching, He Himself prophesying in us, He Himself dwelling in us, opening for us who had been in bondage the door of the temple, which is the mouth, and giving us repentance leadeth us to the incorruptible temple" (xvii.).

The writer assumes that the main facts of the Gospel are known to his readers. Our Lord's miracles, His choice of the Twelve, His Crucifixion, His pre-existence and activity in the Creation, His Incarnation as the Son of God, His expected Return to judgment are all alluded to as foundation-truths. He teaches that Christ died as a sacrifice for sins, so that we might be forgiven and sanctified, and reign with him when we are perfected. The death of Christ is an objective fact, which is latent throughout the whole of Scripture, and its efficacy as the cure of sin must simply be believed.

The text of Barnabas is one of the documents included in the Codex Sinaiticus: there is a Latin version lacking the last four chapters. Eight Greek MSS. are known, sharing the same omission. But the Constantinople MS. of Bryennius is complete.

THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS.

Bishop Mitchell describes this book as "a manual of personal religion cast in an imaginative form" (*Dictionary of the Apostolic Church*, Art. "Hermas"). As such it is the remote ancestor of Dante's great poem and of *the Vision of Piers Plowman*, and indeed of all the mystical visions of the Christian Church. It claims to be the vehicle of Divine revelation, and this quasi-prophetic character gives it a unique place among the early Christian writings. Though it is long and perhaps tedious, the slight framework of a story, its autobiographical references, its glimpses of the Roman Church of its own day, and its imaginative quaintnesses give it great interest.

The Shepherd is the divine teacher of repentance who instructs Hermas in a series of twelve "Mandates" and ten "Similitudes" or Parables, after he has seen five remarkable Visions. The scene is in Rome at the house of Hermas, or on the road to Cumae, or on the Via Campana, and once in Arcadia, whence Hermas may have come to Rome as a slave.

With regard to the date, it is well-known to Irenaeus (A.D. 177), Tertullian, Origen, and Clement of Alexandria, who regard it as in some sense inspired. The author of *The Muratorian Canon* (*circ.* 180) says, "The Shepherd was written quite lately (i.e. relatively to the New Testament writings) in our times by Hermas while his brother Pius was sitting in the chair of the Church of the city of Rome". This statement, says Lightfoot, is not consistent with the

mention of Clement (*Hermas*) as a contemporary: "either some other Clement is meant, or the Latin of the Canon is wrongly translated from the lost original in Greek". Other views are—that of Origen, that it was written by the Hermas of Romans xvi. 14; and that of Zahn and Salmon, that it was contemporary with the Epistle of Clement (*circ.* A.D. 95), which would agree well with certain early features, and with its being placed between two persecutions. Lightfoot accepts the later date "not without diffidence". But for the evidence of *The Muratorian Canon* critics would certainly place it in the first century.

Hermas was a freed slave of a Roman lady named Rhoda: he had prospered in business by unworthy means for a time, but had eventually been ruined, and this had been his salvation. He had failed to train his children well, and his wife lacked self-restraint. He paints himself as "patient and good-tempered and always smiling, full of simplicity and guilelessness . . . somewhat dull, but always ready to learn" (Vis. i. 2). As we have seen he was either the Roman of the New Testament, an unknown person of Clement's time, or as is most probable the brother of Pope Pius I (A.D. 140-155).

The following brief summary will give some idea of his book:—

Vision 1.

Hermas had surprised his mistress bathing in the Tiber, and though a married man had wished she were his wife. He falls asleep on the road to Cumae, and has a vision of her, in which she reminds him of his sinful thought, and bids him pray for pardon. He next sees an aged lady on a throne, who tells him God is angry with him, not on this account, but because of the way in which he had trained his children. Enjoining a stricter discipline she comforts him smilingly, and bids him "play the man".

Vision 2.

He sees the same lady in the same place, and reads her book. Its message was partly about his wife and family, and partly for "the rulers of the Church," of righteousness, and steadfast endurance of the coming persecution. A beautiful youth reveals to him that the woman is the Church, aged "because she was created before all things". Two copies are to be made of her book, one for Clement to send to the foreign cities, and one for Grapte to use for the widows and orphans.

Vision 3.

The lady shows him six youths building a tower of many kinds of stones brought by other youths. The tower is built on water (Baptism), and founded on a rock (the Word of God). The various kinds of stone symbolize various kinds of Christians. Some are built in, and some rejected. He also sees seven women round the tower: these are Faith the Mother, and Temperance, Simplicity, Innocence, Modesty, Knowledge, Love, all born successively one of another.

Vision 4.

He sees a cloud of dust on the Campanian road, out of which a monster appears breathing out locusts. Presently he meets the lady Ecclesia, gorgeously dressed, who explains that this is the coming persecution. The Christians are to repent, and cast their cares on the Lord and trust, and all will be well.

Vision 5.

The shepherd comes to dwell with Hermas: "a man glorious in his visage," in shepherd's garb, with a white skin wrapped about him, and a staff in his hand. Hermas at first suspects evil. He reassures him, and bids him write

his Mandates and Parables. He is called "the angel of repentance".

Mandate i.

Believe that God is One. Fear Him, and be continent.

Mandate ii.

Be simple and childlike. Neither speak nor listen to evil. Work hard; be generous.

Mandate iii.

Love truth, and hate lies. This touches the conscience of Hermas, who has told lies in business: he is henceforth to reform.

Mandate iv.

Be absolutely pure. Desire worketh death. The husband of an unfaithful wife must divorce her. He must not marry another, but must receive her back if she repent. If he married another he would make her repentance impossible. Baptism washes previous sins away; pardon is given only to *one* lapse afterwards. Remarriage after widowhood is allowed, but it is to be deprecated.

Mandate v.

Be long-suffering, and restrain an angry temper, "the most evil of evil spirits".

Mandate vi.

Walk the straight path and not the crooked. Two angels are in man, the righteous and the wicked, one inspires good, one evil. Trust the Angel of righteousness.

Mandate vii.

Fear God and not the devil for there is no power in him.

Mandate viii.

Gives general rules on temperance and virtue. Good works include faith, fear of the Lord, love, concord, words of righteousness, truth, patience: from these follow care for widows, orphans and the poor, hospitality, generosity to debtors, etc.

Mandate ix.

Do not doubt or distrust God. Double-mindedness is a daughter of the devil.

Mandate x.

Put away sadness, which displeases the Holy Spirit, and clothe thyself with cheerfulness, which God loves: "the sad man is always committing sin".

Mandate xi.

A vision of the "false prophet" teaching the doubtful-minded. He says what they wish. "By his life test the man that hath the divine spirit," he is gentle, quiet, humble, pure: "When the man that hath the Spirit cometh into an assembly of good men, who have faith in a divine Spirit, and intercession is made to God, then the angel of the prophetic spirit, who is attached to him, filleth the man, and the man speaketh to the multitude, as the Lord wills." The false prophet is empty, venal, and shuns the assembly of the good, being dumb in their presence.

Mandate xii.

Remove from thyself all evil desire, and follow the good. Can these twelve commandments be kept? Yes, if you believe they can. The devil may wrestle with you, but he cannot overthrow you. I was sent to strengthen your faith.

The Parables.

(i) Ye are like strangers in a foreign land. Trouble not about the joys of this country which are so alien to your own. "Instead of fields buy souls that are in trouble," which you will find at last in your own city.

(ii) The rich and the poor are like the elm and the vine. They support one another, the one by giving, the other by praying. They are both blessed by God.

(iii) and (iv) The withered trees with their leaves shed are all alike, so are the righteous and the wicked in this world's winter. But the world to come is "summer to the righteous, and winter to the sinners".

(v) Hermas is keeping a "station," or a fast. He learns that a true fast is to serve God truly: so Christ, like a faithful servant who in addition to obeying his master's commands, while he was away, cleansed the soil of weeds, and was rewarded by being made joint-heir with his master's son (the Holy Spirit) and fed on dainty meats.

(See comment on this heretical doctrine below.)

(vi) and (vii) The two shepherds (the Angels of Pleasure and Punishment) and the two flocks. The quietest of the first flock are drafted into the second, and the friskiest left behind: so repentance implies discipline and humiliation.

(viii) Michael lops the branches of a willow-tree, and the rods are given to various people, who return them in different conditions. He has them planted and watered, and the results in the different cases are like the varying characters of men.

(ix) The elaborate parable is a vision seen in Arcadia. There is a mountain surrounded by twelve hills on a wide plain. There is a rock guarded by twelve maidens. Six men come with labourers, and call up stones from the abyss, which they deliver to the maidens. A tower is thus built on the rock. The King comes and tests the stones, and gives

those that are unfit to the shepherd to dress. Most are replaced in the wall. Hermas is left with the Virgins, who treat him kindly, and when the shepherd returns he explains how the rock and the tower and the King represent Christ: the six men are the chief angels: the twelve maidens are Faith, Continence, Power, Long-suffering, Simplicity, Innocence, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Intelligence, Concord, and Love. The abyss is baptism, the hills the nations, and the tower the Church.

(x) The angel bids Hermas obey the shepherd and make known his commands to men, and sends the twelve virgins also to dwell with him, "for in a clean house they will gladly dwell". Be careful to do good works.

The Church in which Hermas lives has its two types of ministers still. These are the apostles, bishops, teachers and deacons of iii. 5, and the prophets of Mandate xi. By his time peculation and hypocrisy had become not uncommon in the diaconate. The Bishop's houses were centres of hospitality to the needy. Clement had the special duty of communicating with other churches, and Grapte, a deaconess, instructs widows and orphans. True prophecy is still in evidence, but its counterfeit is also much to the fore, apparently in heretical meetings. As in Clement's Epistle we are unable to discover where the supreme power lay, but it can hardly be doubted that one "bishop" was already in a position that was representative of the rest, and indeed of the Roman Church as a whole.

The fifth parable is remarkable for a form of heretical teaching known as Adoptionism. The good slave in the story is "the Son of God," and he is freed for his good works and fidelity, and made joint-heir with the Holy Spirit. It would seem that the Holy Spirit and the Son tend to be identified in "The Shepherd"—"For that Spirit is the Son of God".

Hermas teaches the destruction of unrepentant sinners, and of the Gentiles, because of their ignorance of God (Mandate iv.). He apparently believes in guardian angels, (Vision 5) and in works of supererogation (Mandate v. 3). He mentions Baptism and Fasting, but not the Eucharist.

In the mass of his moral teaching we have echoes of St. James rather than St. Paul. He is intensely practical, "and his mission is to recall Christians from the danger of too intimate contact with pagan social influence".

He does not quote Scripture, but is full of its spirit and phraseology, and is therefore a strong witness to the canon of the New Testament, his statement as to the four feet of the couch in Vision (3, xiii.) "for the world too is upheld by four elements" being regarded by Dr. C. Taylor as the basis of the famous words of Irenaeus on the necessarily fourfold character of the Gospel.

The first quarter of Hermas is in the Codex Sinaiticus, the rest up to *Par.* ix. 30 is in the Athos MS. of the fourteenth century: while the concluding part is supplied from Latin versions, of which there are two.

THE EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS.

THE exquisite beauty of this fragment tempts one to include it in the earliest literature of the Church, although it is quite possible that it belongs to the third century. Bishop Lightfoot, however, thinks it more probable that it was written about A.D. 150, in the time of Justin Martyr, among whose spurious writings it was included in the Strasburg MS. (which was destroyed in the war of 1870), and to whom it was wrongly attributed.

It is a good introduction to the age of the Apologists, and it touches with a sure and cultured hand many of the topics with which the great line of the defenders of the Christian faith were occupied in their presentation of the new religion to the critical and inquiring minds around them.

It has been suggested with some plausibility that Diognetus was the noble Athenian philosopher who was entrusted with the education of Marcus Aurelius. There is a certain atmosphere of courts and culture in the writing, in spite of its vivid sympathy with the simplicity of the Christian life, and the allusion in c. vii. to "the King sending his son who is also a King" might well have a contemporary reference to the adoption of Marcus Aurelius by Antoninus Pius, or to Marcus Aurelius sharing the Imperial power with L. Aelius or Commodus.

The two last chapters do not belong to the original work. They have all the appearance of being the conclusion of a sermon at the Eucharist, before the departure of the catechumens. The actual conclusion of the apology is lost. Lightfoot considers it not unlikely that the two concluding

chapters were the work of Pantaenus, the instructor of Clement of Alexandria (c. 180-200). Westcott notices their reflection of the teaching of St. John's Gospel and suggests its connexion with the Ophite heretical sect, who largely used that Gospel (*Bible in Church*, p. 106).

A short summary will best reveal the writer's power and method.

Introduction.—(i) I gladly satisfy your curiosity, Diognetus, about the Christian religion: you inquire what God they worship, how it is they despise Greek and Jewish Gods, how they love another, and as to the significance of their new interest in life.

(ii) Clear your mind then of all prejudice, and hear a new story. The worship of material gods is philosophically absurd. Do they not rot and decay? You hate the Christians for rejecting them. But if they are divine is not your worship an insult to them? your guarding of your valuable idols, and neglect of the cheaper ones—your propitiation of them by blood and fat. No human being would like it. Therefore your gods must be insensible.

(iii) The Jews are equally at fault. They sacrifice similarly, but to a living God, and they wrongly suppose that He who is in need of nothing needs burnt offerings.

(iv) The Jews' religion of meats, the Sabbath, Circumcision, Fasting and new moons, is foolish. The Christians rightly abjure the silliness, "fussiness" and pride of the Jews.

(v) "The Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind either in locality or in speech or in customs." Yet theirs is a marvellous citizenship. "They dwell in their own countries, but only as sojourners; they bear their share of all things as citizens, and they endure all hardships as strangers. Every foreign country is a fatherland to them, and every fatherland is foreign. They marry like other men and beget children, but they do not cast away their

offspring. They have their meals in common, but not their wives. They find themselves in the flesh, and yet they live not after the flesh. Their existence is on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the established laws, but they surpass the laws in their own lives. They love all men, and they are persecuted by all. They are ignored, and yet they are condemned. They are put to death, and yet they are endued with life. They are in beggary, and yet they make many rich. They are in want of all things, and yet they abound in all things." Jew and Greek alike persecute them, and yet do not know why they do it.

(vi) "In a word what the soul is to the body, thus the Christians are in the world. The soul is spread through all the members of the body, and Christians through the divers cities of the world." They are in the world, not of it. The flesh hates the soul, but the soul loves the flesh: The soul is enclosed in the body and yet holds it together. "So Christians are kept in the world as in a prison-house; and yet they hold the world together." Punishment multiplies them: "So great is the office, for which God hath appointed them, which they may not decline."

(vii) Their treasure is in no sense a human thing. God sent His teaching not "by a subaltern, angel, or ruler," "but by the very Artificer and Creator of the Universe Himself," Lord of the elements, the sun, moon and stars, earth, sea, and fire. He was not sent to inspire fear? No. "In gentleness and meekness has He sent Him as a King might send His Son, who is a King. He sent Him as sending God. He sent Him as a man unto men; He sent Him as Saviour, as using persuasion, not force—for force is no attribute of God." . . . Persecution increases his followers: there is the proof of His presence.

(viii) There was no real knowledge of God before Him: philosophical theory is but quackery. All knowledge of

Him is by *revelation*. God has communicated His whole loving scheme to His Son alone for Him to reveal. We know through Him.

(ix) The reign of sin and disorder was preparatory in God's scheme to that of righteousness. When we plainly deserved death, "O, the exceeding great kindness and love of God"; He in pity took our sin upon Him, and gave His own Son as a ransom "that the iniquity of many should be concealed in One Righteous Man, and the righteousness of One should justify many that are iniquitous."

(x) This faith rests on knowledge of God: "For God loved men". Knowing Him, thou wilt love Him, and therefore imitate Him. We cannot imitate God's greatness of power: that "lies outside His greatness". "But whosoever taketh upon Himself the burden of his neighbour, whosoever desireth to benefit one that is worse off in that in which he himself is superior, whosoever by supplying to those in want possessions which he received from God, becomes a God to those that receive them: he is an imitator of God." So shalt thou attain life, and admire those who are ready to die for it in the fire. . . .

(xi) As a disciple of apostles I hand on the tradition. It was revealed by the Word to the disciples. "This Word, who was from the beginning, who appeared as new and yet was proved to be old, and is engendered always young in the hearts of the saints" is the source of grace. And by grace you will understand the discourse of the Word through His preachers.

(xii) You will know how God makes those that love Him a Paradise, wherein are trees of knowledge and of life. Though our first parents were deceived by the serpent—yet "neither is there knowledge without life, nor life without knowledge". All are deceived by the serpent who think they can have knowledge apart from the obedience that

leads to life. In the Church of God knowledge and life are in perfect harmony—therein is "the harvest which God looks for which serpent toucheth not, nor deceit infecteth, neither is Eve corrupted but is believed on as a virgin, and salvation is set forth, and the apostles are filled with understanding, and the passover of the Lord goes forward, and the congregations [1] are gathered together, and (all things) are arranged in order, and as he teacheth the saints the Word is gladdened, through Whom the Father is glorified to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Thus in the ten first chapters the writer explains (i) the ground of the Christian rejection of the Greek gods, and of their severance from Judaism; (ii) the supernatural basis of their new life of mutual love, and submission to persecution in the revelation of the love of God in Jesus Christ His own Son, Who reveals the reality of God's nature, which is open to our imitation, and accounts for the marvels of the Christian life socially and individually, and (iii) he apparently begins in chapter x., to dwell on the significance of the appearance of "this new race," in relation to the past and the Second Advent. In short, he probably concluded with an historical envisagement of the place of the Christian Church in God's complete plan.

In the last two chapters, deep in mysticism and the theology of "The Word," the writer points to Christ as the Light, at last sent forth, "that was from the beginning, that appeared new, but was found to be old, and is ever newly begotten in the hearts of saints": Communion with him is secured by learning from his preachers, and the knowledge is attained, which Adam missed by disobedience; for knowledge and life are made one in the Christian Church, and are rapturously experienced in the Eucharistic service, when "the Word is gladdened".

[1] Lightfoot accepts Bunsen's emendation κλῆροι for κῆροι, *candles*.

PAPIAS.

Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, was in all probability born between the years A.D. 60 and 70. Irenaeus, who according to Jerome was his pupil, describes him as "a hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, an ancient worthy". But Eusebius draws attention to the fact that he never declared himself to be "a hearer and eye-witness of the holy Apostles," and considers that his words imply that he only received his information from their friends. We have to choose between the express statement of Irenaeus, which of course should carry great weight, and the somewhat captious words of Eusebius, who wrote two centuries later, and was prejudiced against Papias because of his millenarian views. Indeed he openly stigmatizes him as a man of "very small mental capacity". Lightfoot has shown the arguments against his personal association with St. John to be inconclusive, and Cruttwell regards it as "probable, though not fully proved".

He wrote a work in five books, probably between A.D. 130 and 140, entitled "An Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord," which would be unspeakably valuable, if we possessed it. But we have only a few fragments, preserved mainly by Eusebius. It was in no sense a Gospel, but rather of the nature of a commentary on our Lord's sayings, the materials for which Papias had gathered in the Apostolic circle in Asia Minor, most probably at Ephesus.

His few words in one fragment are perhaps the most

important evidential material for the origin of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, and they, according to the interpretation given to them, have the first place in the arguments of those who deal with the Synoptic problem. In another he gives us almost our only information about the apostolic circle in Asia Minor, in a third a specimen of the apocalyptic views of the early Church, and in a fourth an interesting legend of Judas. The story of the woman taken in adultery, which is known to be a late interpolation in St. John's Gospel, is apparently stated by Eusebius to have been expounded by Papias from a passage in the Gospel according to the Hebrews. (Westcott and Hort, N.T. ii. Notes, p. 91; Euseb., *H.E.* iii. 39). As these fragments are of great importance, I will quote them in full.

Fragment i. (From the Preface to the Work.)

But I will not scruple also to give a place for you along with my interpretations to everything that I learnt carefully and remembered carefully in time past from the elders, guaranteeing its truth. For, unlike the many, I did not take pleasure in those who have so very much to say, but in those that teach the truth; nor in those who relate foreign commandments, but in those (who record) such as were given from the Lord to the Faith, and are derived from the Truth itself. And again, on any occasion when a person came (in my way) who had been a follower of the Elders, I would enquire about the discourses of the elders—what was said by Andrew, or by Peter, or by Philip, or by Thomas or James, or by John or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, and what Aristion and the Elder John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I did not think that I could get so much profit from the contents of books, as from the utterance of a living and abiding voice. (Euseb., *Hist. Ec.* iii. 39).

Fragment ii.

And the Elder said this also: Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered, without however recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow Him; but afterwards, as I said (attended) Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs (of his hearers) but had no design of giving a connected account of the Lord's oracles. So then Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his one care not to omit anything that he heard, or to set down any false statement therein . . . .

So then Matthew composed the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as he could. (Euseb., *H.E.* iii. 39).

Fragment iii.

(Papias reports St. John as saying that our Lord taught as follows.) The days will come, in which vines shall grow, each having 10,000 shoots, and on each shoot 10,000 branches, and on each branch again 10,000 twigs, and on each twig 10,000 clusters, and on each cluster 10,000 grapes, and each grape when pressed shall yield 25 measures of wine. And when any of the saints shall have taken hold of one of their clusters, another shall cry, I am a better cluster, take me, bless the Lord through me. Likewise also a grain of wheat shall produce 10,000 heads, and every head shall have 10,000 grains, and every grain 10 pounds of fine flour, bright and clean, and the other fruits, seeds, and the grass shall produce in similar proportions, and all the animals, using these fruits which are products of the soil, shall become in their turn peaceable and harmonious obedient to man in all subjection.

But those things are credible to them that believe. And

when Judas the traitor did not believe, and asked, how shall such growths be accomplished by the Lord? he relates that the Lord said, They shall see, who shall come to these (times). (Irenaeus, *Haer.* V. xxxiii. 3 and 4.)

Fragment iv.

Judas (did not die by hanging, but was cut down) and walked about in this world a terrible example of impiety; his flesh swollen to such an extent, that where a waggon can pass with ease, he was not able to pass, no, not even the mass of his head merely. They say that his eyelids swelled to such an extent that he could not see the light at all, while as for his eyes they were not visible even by a physician looking through an instrument, so far had they sunk from the surface. (Cramer, *Catena ad Acta S.S. Apostol.* (1838), p. 12 *sq.*; Lightfoot, *Ap. Fathers*, p. 535.)

Eusebius also notes that Papias recorded a marvellous tale from the daughters of Philip of a man being raised from the dead, another of Barsabas swallowing a deadly poison without being harmed, and of a teaching of Christ that there will be a period of 10,000 years after the resurrection, during which the Kingdom of Christ will exist on earth, a belief which Eusebius attributes to a too literal understanding of mystical teaching, and which he laments has misled many church fathers.

This is all that remains of Papias. Such fragments as iii. and iv. (Eus., *H.E.* iii. 39) seem to confirm Eusebius' estimate of his mental capacity, viz.: that he "was very limited in his grasp". The utmost credit we could give to iii. would be to regard it as a very much garbled and exaggerated version of some saying of our Lord, perhaps a quotation from Apocalyptic literature. At least iii. and iv. serve to throw out in strong relief the simplicity and sanity of the canonical writings. But it is interesting to have a glimpse

into the confused circle of ideas in which the intellectual life of Papias moved, and to realize that side by side with the sober inspiration of canonical books there was an undergrowth of curious speculation and inquiry, an unrestricted popular comment on the text constantly growing, whose statements were not yet altogether disentangled from the authority of the recognized books. Fragment ii., taken almost in its literal sense, is the foundation of the conclusions of modern criticism on the origin of our first three Gospels. It stands for the Two Document theory, viz.: that in Mark we have the original account of our Lord's works, while the principal elements in both Matthew and Luke are drawn from the writing which Papias refers to as the "Oracles in the Hebrew Language," and is usually referred to as the "Logia". Fragment i., his preface, of course raises a host of interesting questions; among them whether Papias implies the existence of two Johns at Ephesus, and which of the Johannine books are to be credited to each. Lightfoot thinks that the Apostle and the Elder were two distinct persons.

THE GNOSTIC SYSTEMS.

To give a detailed account of the Gnostic schools would be beyond the modest scope of this survey of early Christian writings. But at the same time it is impossible to understand early Christian literature without realizing how great the influence of Gnosticism was both without and within the Church during the first four centuries. It was like a subtle atmosphere in which Christian thinking had to be done, and sometimes it penetrated into the thought.

Gnosticism was practically a sister-religion, compounded of Persian, Samaritan, Alexandrian, and Jewish belief, and Greek philosophy, which came into being side by side with Christianity, and offered its own interpretation of the same problems which Christ claimed to solve. It was no mere product of fanciful Christian thought. It was in existence as early as Christianity, and it made a strong and persistent effort to absorb and transform it. Simon Magus, as has been well said, "baptized, but still 'in the bond of iniquity,' is typical of the relation of Gnosticism to the Church".

In the face of much difference of view among scholars on the references to Gnostic error in the New Testament, a question that it would take us too far to enter upon here, we may note the following passages, as seeming to be directed against such ideas—Col. ii. 8-18, and 21, 23; 1 Tim. iv. 3, 4, 7; II Tim. ii. 18; iii. 6, 7; iv. 3, 4; Titus 1-16; iii. 9; 1 John ii. 22, iv. 3 *sq.*, ii. 4, 9; Rev. ii. 6, 15, 20. Thus the earliest documents probably begin a contest which has not ceased even in our day,

for Theosophy is but modern Gnosticism. The Gnostics agreed in claiming a special "gnosis" or "knowledge," hence their name. This was given, they asserted, by revelation and secretly handed on. Their chief principle was the dualism between God and matter, which is essentially evil. The kingdom of goodness and reality is eternally opposed to the world of phenomena—the one is the Pleroma or "Fulness," the other the Kenoma or "Emptiness". And the world that we know was not the creation of God, but of an inferior being, a "Demiurge" or Creator, who tended to be regarded as God's enemy. He sprang from a distant "Aeon," or emanation from God. One such Aeon was supposed to have fallen into our evil Cosmos, and introduced a spark of good. He longs for release, and the most perfect Aeon comes to redeem him and the Cosmos. Thus the redemption of individual souls becomes possible, through the knowledge of ideal truth imparted by the Saviour: and the redeemed have to learn how to contend successfully by magical arts against the spirits that oppose them. In contact with Christianity the Gnostics were content to regard Christ as the "Saviour-Aeon," but the idea of an Incarnation in matter was impossible to them; so they made His Humanity a mere appearance, a doctrine that is called Docetism.

Their attitude to matter and the body led different schools of Gnostics along two opposite paths. Despising the body, they either gave full reign to lust, or in rigid asceticism forswore marriage and all pleasures of the senses.

The main result of the long conflict of Gnosticism with Christianity was that the Church had found herself compelled to develop the implications of her own belief, and to decide on the Canon of her sacred and inspired books. She emerged from the contest with a Creed and a New Testament. And Gnosticism, for all its brilliant pretensions and

lofty speculation, died down, as incapable of permanently attracting the human spirit.

Simon of Gitteh and Cerinthus come down to us as the chief Gnostics of New Testament times: whether the former was identical with Simon Magus is an unsolved problem, and it is impossible to disentangle the true from the false in the strange story of his pretensions to be a manifestation of God. His "Great Announcement" was known to Justin and Hippolytus. Cerinthus was an Egyptian educated at Alexandria, and may well have come into contact with St. John at Ephesus. The account of his teaching in Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius shows him to have mingled Gnosticism with Judaism: the God of the Jews was according to his view an angel, not a hostile demiurge: he held the views of the Ebionites as to Christ's humanity; and St. John's writings seem to allude to him in places.

Basilides, active as a teacher early in the second century, Valentinus (attacked by Justin before A.D. 145) and Marcion are the great Gnostic leaders of the second century. Basilides wrote a commentary called "Exegetica," and a Gospel for his followers.

His system is the philosophy of the evolution of the sons of God through a complicated development from the original seed created by the Supreme God. Our world was not His direct creation, but that of "The Great Archon," who ruled from Adam to Moses; a second Archon (Jehovah) succeeded him, and before the coming of Christ these Archons realized they were not supreme, and felt the fear of the Lord, which entered our sphere in Jesus, who is drawing up the sons of God to a state called "the great Ignorance," similar to the Buddhist Nirvana.

Valentinus made wider ventures than Basilides: he attempted to indoctrinate the whole Christian world; and the greatest minds of the Church, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and

Origen were occupied in contending with him; in his system there is a supreme God and a Demiurge, but Redemption is wrought first in the Pleroma by the Aeon Christus, and the Soter (Saviour) Who comes down to save the mundane sphere is but His counterpart. He is not incarnate but he descended on the earthly Christ at His Baptism, and deserted Him at His Passion. There were two Christs in Jesus, a psychical and a pneumatic; the pneumatic ascended to the Pleroma, and the psychical to the Demiurge. And men are divided according as they can rise to the psychical or the pneumatic Christ. It was a very elaborate theology, with a great array of aeons, and grades of interrelated beings. Its popularity and wide acceptance give us an idea of the kind of world into which the simple teaching of the Church was penetrating: a world, as St. Paul says, "which by wisdom knew not God".

Marcion was an even more dangerous enemy, because he was not so much a theosophist as a practical religious leader. He held the Gnostic tenets—the distinction between the Supreme God and the Demiurge, the low view of the Old Testament, the non-material character of Jesus Christ Who came from the Supreme God. From Tertullian's book against him we recognize the exalted place he gave to Christ, as the only possible and full manifestation to man of the highest good, and his lofty if imperfect and erroneous teaching that God is love only, and has no room in His nature for justice. Christ to him is not the Messiah promised in the Old Testament by the Demiurge. He is a superior Being, Whom the Demiurge failing to understand persecutes and slays by the hands of the Jews. The Gospel to Marcion was in violent opposition with the Law, yet he lived a rigidly ascetic life disdaining marriage and pleasure. His rigour indeed was the cause of his leaving a too indulgent Church, and founding his own sect.

He rejected everything in the Bible that did not square with his own views, considered St. Paul's the genuine picture of Christ, and adapted the Gospel of St. Luke on a Pauline basis for the use of his followers. He died about A.D. 166, having founded a sect that had congregations wherever the Church existed, and was still flourishing two centuries later.

Such were the leading schools of the Gnosticism which threatened in the second century to displace the truth delivered to the saints. The struggle was all the more vehement because of the superficial likenesses between Christianity and Gnosticism. By its kindred ideas it was able to claim fellowship with the Church. But it was essentially alien to the Christian revelation, it had its own roots, asserted its own freedom, and revealed itself to the Christian instinct as its subtlest enemy. Its very vigour caused such strong reactions against it, that by the third century it became "a spent force".

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

THE early books we have already considered are of an orthodox character, put together in a literary form that appealed to the educated leaders of the Church. And the Christian writings, as one advances further into the second century, in their warfare with heathen philosophy, Jewish attacks, and heresy, become more and more the preserve of the highly-cultured. They cannot represent the minds of the vast mass of a Christian populace, drawn from the slaves and lowest classes of great cities. The official records, the letters circulated between Churches, the learned apologies full of Greek philosophy and poetry, and assuming an intimate acquaintance with the whole of the Old Testament, were evidently not for them. Even the recognized canonical gospels by their simplicity, plainness and restraint must have seemed cold and formal to the curiosity and imperfect outlook of the uneducated, who were full of credulity, imagination, and superstition. And they had their own literature. It was wild, fantastic, and daring. It boldly filled up the gaps of the canonical gospels. It embroidered the life of Christ and His relatives with superfluous marvels. It followed the apostles amid a host of miracles all over the known world. It penetrated with Paul to the seventh heaven, viewed with him the Throne of glory, and saw the doom of souls. And heretical speculation was not slow to avail itself of this easy road to foist upon the Gospel story its own alien ideas. "The Church," said Eusebius, "has four gospels, heresy has many". We should look then in

the apocryphal writings which began to grow up side by side with the canonical, and continued to be produced long after the Canon of the New Testament was complete, for a real picture of what many of the rank and file representing one side of the Church's life, dreamed and fancied. Their feet were fixed on the ground of moral renewal and sanity, but their eyes were set on strange fantastic shores. They had turned their backs on the rout of corruption, and in retirement from the world, their imagination wove a fabric for the most part unrecognized and unlicensed by the official teachers of the Church.

The Apocryphal Gospels alone open an immense field of inquiry. What is the relation of each to the local conditions where it arose? Amid its various editions as it passed down the years how far can we detect the original elements? What were the interrelations of documents that closely resemble one another? How far has this or that Gospel been altered from its earlier form in the interests either of heresy, or of orthodoxy? What does a chance quotation from them in an orthodox writer imply as to his conception of their standing and authority? Such are some of the questions discussed by the students of this wide range of books. Moreover, additions to the store are from time to time being made from Eastern libraries and the dust-heaps of Egypt, which still further complicate the problems.

The main inquiry of the ordinary Christian believer, whether any light upon our Lord's life and words, apart from what the canonical gospels give us, is to be discovered in these books, may be easily answered. They supply us with nothing about Christ upon which we can rely, save a few isolated sayings, distorted and exaggerated, the original element of which may have passed from mouth to mouth among the early disciples without being captured by the compilers or the writers of our gospels. Students of these gospels come

back to the New Testament with a renewed and thankful sense of its exact reproduction of the events it describes, its correct transcription of the recorded words of our Lord, its plain simplicity, its providential inspiration and preservation, and the sense that the Church was divinely guided in setting apart in the early years of the second century the literature we know as the New Testament, as its official standard of belief, into which it became more and more impossible for anything alien to its spirit and authority to be introduced. Thus the writers we have considered quote largely and almost exclusively from our canonical books, and we realize that they were on the way to the definite statements of *The Muratorian Canon* (A.D. 180), to the comparison by Irenaeus (A.D. 177) of the Gospels to the four winds, and to the words of Origen on St. Luke's Preface, which after ruling out the Gospels of the Egyptians, of the Twelve, of Thomas, of Basilides, and a spurious Matthew, conclude "but the Church of God accepts only the four". But in spite of ecclesiastical condemnation the Christian apocrypha flourished from century to century, developing in the manner of Hebrew Midrash, incorporating the romantic elements of Hellenic and Indian story, like a wild garden full of plants borrowed from foreign lands.

The usual method of roughly grouping this large mass of kindred literary matter is to arrange them in three classes, which occasionally overlap, viz. :—

(i) Gospels of the type of our first three Gospels, which follow early tradition.

(ii) Gospels definitely in the interest of heresy.

(iii) Gospels which are intended to fill up the gaps in the tradition of the canonical gospels and more particularly of the Infancy.

But Dr. Moffatt classifies them more conveniently according to their subject-matter, as follows :—

1. Gospels of the Birth and Infancy of Jesus.
2. General gospels covering our Lord's life and ministry.
3. Gospels of the Passion and Resurrection.

We will follow this method of classification here—

1. *Gospels of the Infancy.*

(i) *The Protevangelium Jacobi*, brought back from the East in 15— by the French scholar Postel,[1] tells the miraculous birth of Mary, introducing artless and naive pictures of the peasant life of Joachim and Anna, her being placed in the Temple, and her union with the aged Joseph, the Virgin-Birth and Flight into Egypt. "None of the Infancy Gospels is so free from extravagance and silliness. The child Jesus is a child, and if the halo has begun to grow round the head of Mary she is still a woman" (Moffatt). It claims to be written shortly after the death of Herod the Great, but is probably of the third century.

(ii) *The Gospel of Thomas.*—The original seems to have existed early in the second century. Our extant versions are probably as late as the Protevangelium. It is impossible to say what the original element was. The child Jesus is throughout a miracle-worker; He causes his clay sparrows to fly away, He heals a boy who cut his foot splitting wood, and Joseph when bitten by a viper, He carries water to his mother in his cloak. Sometimes He is malevolent. He strikes a boy dead who offended Him, and is regarded as a nuisance by the village. The picture is often unpleasant, as in the school story which suggests Gnosticism. The Master said, "Say Alpha," He said, "Alpha". But when the Master went on and ordered Him to say "Beta," the Lord replied, "You tell Me first what Alpha means, and I will tell you what Beta means".

(iii) *Pseudo-Matthew.* This is a compilation from the

[1] A Latin version was first published in 1552.

two former gospels and other sources. The story of the flight into Egypt has many new details. Lions accompany the Holy Family and aid their oxen, and wolves leave them unharmed. The idols in the Egyptian Temple bow down and are broken. At the word of the child a palm tree bends and refreshes Mary with its fruit, and opens a spring of water from its roots. As a boy Jesus enters the lion's cave and tames the lions, who follow Him, the waters of Jordan parting before them.

2. *General Gospels.*

(i) A group of Jewish Christian Gospels including the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, the *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, the *Gospel of the Ebionites*, and the *Gospel of the Twelve*. These were probably independent works with much common matter, though it is thought by some that that of the Hebrews and that of the Nazarenes were identical, and the Gospel of the Twelve the same as that of the Ebionites. "The differentiation," says Moffat, "is a precarious task, and in the present state of our knowledge no reconstruction can claim to be more than conjectural. The probability is that there were several Jewish Christian Gospels approximating more or less closely to the type of Matthew."

The Nazarene Gospel seems to be quoted by Ignatius, and was probably written before the end of the first century.

The Gospel of the Hebrews was in Greek; it seems to have been in use in Palestine and Egypt, and was probably of the same date as the Nazarene.

The Gospel of the Ebionites is described by Epiphanius (*Haer.* xxx. 3) as a mutilated version of St. Matthew, stripped of the Birth and Genealogy; the description of the Baptism implies that our Lord became the Christ at that point by the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Ebionites being vegetarians, references to animal food are eliminated. It

would not be possible to regard this Gospel as the original of St. Matthew.

(ii) *The Gospel of the Egyptians.*—As we have seen, this was probably used by the unknown author of the Homily known as St. Clement early in the second century. It was evidently written for Egyptians, and must have been produced about A.D. 125. It was marked by a strict asceticism, and advocated abstention from Marriage. When Salome asked "How long shall death prevail?" the Lord said: "So long as you women bear". Then said she, "I would have done well in not bearing". The Lord replies, "Eat every herb, but do not eat the bitter" (Clem., *Strom.*, iii. 9). The recently discovered Oxyrhynchus fragments have considerable affinities with what we know of this Gospel, which was very popular with the Sabellians.

(iii) *The Gospel of Peter.*—A lengthy fragment of this Gospel was discovered in 1886 in an eighth century MS. at Akhmîm in Upper Egypt. It opens at the end of the trial of our Lord, after Pilate washes his hands, and ends abruptly after the Resurrection. It is most probable that it dates from the very end of the first century. It seems to depend upon St. Mark and St. Matthew, but its similarities to St. Luke and St. John may be reasonably thought to be due to the fact that they employed a common traditional material. Nay, this Gospel may be "a popular early type of the inferior narratives, which Luke desired to supersede". Its Gnostic elements too are distinctly early.

It aims at incriminating the Jews, and exculpating the Romans, and its Docetic bias is plain in the rendering of our Lord's cry, "My Power, my Power, hast thou forsaken Me," and the statement that He had no pain. In the account of the Resurrection, Peter and the Roman sentries see two men descend from heaven with a great light, and the stone move of its own accord to admit them into the

tomb. They enter, and Peter next sees "three men coming out of the tomb, two supporting the third and a Cross following them; the heads of the two reached as far as heaven but the Head of the One Whom they escorted reached higher than the heavens. And they heard a voice from the heavens saying, "Hast Thou preached to them that sleep"? And from the Cross came the answer—"Yes".

There are no appearances to the woman, or to the disciples at Jerusalem, and there is no Ascension, for the "comely youth" at the tomb on Easter morning tells Mary Magdalene that "the Lord has arisen to heaven".

(iv) As definitely heretical Gospels we hear of that of Basilides, composed before A.D 150, probably a transformed Gospel of St. Luke; that of Marcion, which was also based on St. Luke; and that of Apelles his disciple. There was also a Gospel used by the Ophite Naassenes.

3. *Gospels of the Passion and Resurrection.*

(i) *Gospel of Philip.* Of this we have only one quotation, Gnostic in character. From the *Pistis Sophia* we know it was read in Egypt in the third century.

(ii) *Gospel of Matthias.* This is not quoted, but is denounced by Eusebius with those of Peter and Thomas (*H.E.* iii. 25). It is thought to have been a vehicle of esoteric heretical teaching, supposed to have been given by our Lord after the Resurrection.

(iii) *Gospel of Mary.* This covers certain fragments in a fifth century MS. Schmidt and Harnack regard it as referred to by Irenaeus (*Haer.* i. 29) when denouncing a certain Gnostic sect. The Gnostics often issued writings in the name of Mary.

(iv) *Gospel of Bartholomew.* Eusebius believed that Bartholomew took with him to India the original Hebrew

Gospel of Matthew. But it could not have been this which was denounced by Jerome under the title of the Gospel of Bartholomew. There are fragments of it in Latin as well as Greek. The former are dialogues between Jesus and Bartholomew of a childishly marvellous character. The latter are similar and deal in extravagant imagery with the "Harrowing of Hell," the Virgin-Birth, the Bottomless Pit, and the creation of the Angels.

(v) *Gospel of Nicodemus.* This is really part of a Book of Acts, of the fourth century, elements of which may be of the second.

(vi) *Gospel of Gamaliel.* It is suggested that there was such a Gospel belonging to the literature connected with Pilate. The fragments supposed to belong to it are few.

(vi.) Among heretical Gospels, Epiphanius mentions the *Gospel of Perfection* (xxvi. 2), "as the very perfection of diabolic mischief". It was used by the Nicolaitans or Ophites. He also speaks of the *Gospel of Eve* as a secret Gnostic book of immoral tendency, and of a *Gospel of Judas* (*Iren.* i. 13, 1 : and *Epiph.* xxviii. 1) in which Judas deliberately betrays Jesus in order to forward the Divine purpose of redemption. This was used by the Cainites in the second century. From Coptic fragments we know that the problem of Judas was much discussed. His fall is attributed to his wife's influence. But the Cainites regarded him as a great mystic, who solved a deep mystery, by causing the Christ to suffer.

Turning to the Books of Apocryphal Acts we find, according to C. Schmidt (*Alte Petrusakten und Acta Pauli*, 112 f.), that the Manichaeans had made a collection of five books, (Paul, Peter, John, Andrew, Thomas) to use instead of the canonical Acts. These were afterwards attributed by the Western Church to a heretic named Leucias (hence their common title of the *Leucian Acts*). His name was originally

connected only with the Acts of John. And the Acts of Paul, which were at first regarded as orthodox, were considered heretical through their inclusion in the Manichaean collection. This view is accepted by Professor Kirsopp Lake.

Acts of Paul. By the discovery of the Coptic Text by Schmidt in 1903 it was proved that the well-known *Acts of Paul and Thecla* were a part of the whole work. They describe Paul's journey from Antioch to Iconium, Myrrha, Sidon, Tyre, Sidon, to an imprisonment in the mines of Macedonia, and to Philippi, where he corresponds with the Corinthians, denouncing heresies concerning the resurrection of the flesh, the creation, the real Humanity of Christ, and His birth of Mary, and gives an account of St. Paul's martyrdom by Nero. Tertullian (*De Baptismo* xvii.) regards it as orthodox, and it is attested by Eusebius (*H.E.* iii. 25) as doctrinally of an intermediate character. It must have been written between A.D. 160 and 200. Its theology is not tinged by the heresies of its day, but at the same time it is not Nicene. Jesus Christ is called God, but there is no distinction made consciously between the Word and the Spirit. The controversies of the third century were fought out from this indeterminate basis. The Thekla portion is full of interest and beauty.

Acts of Peter. There are three fragments of this work, the date of which seems to be a little before or after A.D. 200. The first gives a queer story of Peter curing his daughter's paralysis, the second the events preceding Peter's Martyrdom, and the third which overlaps the second is the "Martyrdom of Peter," including the *Quo Vadis?* story. It is dependent on the Acts of Paul, and also, where tinged by Docetism, on the Acts of John.

Acts of John. This is used by Clement of Alexandria (*Adumbrationes* to 1 John i. 1) and is therefore dated about

the middle of the second century. It includes incidents at Ephesus, "a docetic account of the Passion in which the true Christ makes a revelation to the apostles, while the phantasmal Christ is being crucified," and the account of St. John's death after the Sunday Eucharist. Apart from its rigid asceticism and dislike to marriage, it is regarded as "finer literature than the Acts of Paul, some of the mystical passages reaching a magnificent level" (K. Lake, *Dictionary of Apostolic Church*, I., Art., "Apocryphal Acts").

Acts of Andrew. This is supposed to be the work of Leucias, as well as the Acts of John. We have only a few fragments. There is no reference in the account of Andrew's crucifixion to the *shape* of his cross.

Acts of Thomas. The Greek version is from a Syriac original, probably of the third century. It tells the story of the evangelization of India and is full of marvels. It contains two interesting Gnostic hymns, "the Bridal Ode" and "the Hymn of the Soul," considered by Burkitt to belong to the School of Bardesanes (A.D. 154-222).

There are points of contact in Thomas' character as "a twin of Christ" with the cult of the Dioscuri or Heavenly twins at Edessa, where these Acts probably originated. (Rendel Harris: *The Dioscuri in the Christ Legends*, 1903, and *The Cult of the Heavenly Twins*, 1905).

The Apocalypse of Peter.

Besides the Apocalypse of John there were other Apocalyptic writings in the early Church. Part of the Apocalypse of Peter was discovered with the fragment of the Gospel of Peter and published in 1892. This was mentioned in *The Muratorian Canon* (A.D. 170-200) side by side with the *Apocalypse of John*, though marked as doubtful, and by Clement of Alexandria: Eusebius refused to accept it.

"The opinion of scholars seems to be in favour of a very

early origin, going back to quite the beginning of the second, or possibly even to the end of the first century" (Cruttwell, *Literary History of Early Christianity*, i. 157). It contains (i) A discourse of Christ; (ii) A description of Paradise; and (iii) An Inferno. It is not unlike the accounts of the Unseen World found in the Book of Enoch and other Jewish Apocalypses.

In several of such Jewish Apocalyptic works, we find a great deal of Christian interpolation, showing the strong appeal that their mystic imagery made to the Christian mind. We may instance the *Ascension of Isaiah*, and 4 *Ezra*, as well as the *Sibylline Oracles*, except Books iii to v.

THE ODES OF SOLOMON.

I WILL succumb to the temptation of giving a short description of these beautiful poems, although it may be questioned whether they fall within the period of our survey. At any rate they cannot be much outside it, so many are the signs in them of a primitive character. No religious literature is complete without its hymns, and we have had very little evidence yet of the existence of a devotional poetry in the earliest days of the Church. In these odes we have specimens of religious poetry of great literary beauty combined with the sincerest spirit of devotion: they have the common note of a glad and happy faith that sounds in the sacred songs of all Christian churches and sects, and unites the Catholic and Protestant in the deep undertide of religious feeling.

The odes must be distinguished from *The Psalms of Solomon*, which are definitely Jewish and date from about 50 B.C. The Odes were brought back to the world in 1909 by Dr. Rendel Harris' edition of a recently discovered Syriac text: previously only five were known, being quoted in the Gnostic work, the *Pistis Sophia*. The Syriac MS. contained the Psalms as well, and their identification led to that of the odes. The first two odes are missing, but one is supplied from the *Pistis Sophia*.

There are various theories as to the date and character of this collection. Rendel Harris makes them the work of a Jewish Christian at the end of the first century, and he regards them merely as religious poems. Harnack thinks

them to be an originally Jewish collection written before the Fall of the Temple, re-edited and interpolated by a Christian of A.D. 100 : and Dr. Allan Menzies agreed, regarding them as intended for proselytes to the Jewish faith. Grimme is much of Harnack's view.

Archbishop J. H. Bernard, who edited them in *Texts and Studies*, argues in great detail that they are altogether Christian, and "that the numerous allusions which they contain to baptismal doctrine and to the Eastern ritual of baptism indicate that they are Hymns of the Baptized, comparable to the Hymns of Ephraem Syrus". There are many forcible arguments in favour of this view, and their suitability to the use of catechumens before and after baptism becomes more and more evident as one reads them.

They may well have been committed to memory by candidates under instruction in order to impart a wealth of doctrinal truth and a lofty spiritual tone to their minds. Or they may have been a kind of class hymn-book. Cyril's *Catechetical Lectures* at Jerusalem (A.D. 347) are full of echoes of their imagery.

They appear in ancient lists of uncanonical Scriptures side by side with the Psalms of Solomon. Solomon is said to have written 1005 odes (1 Kings, iv. 32). It was therefore natural for an anonymous writer to ascribe his work to Solomon. There seems to be no other explanation of their name.

It is then a hymn-book of the early Church that we have before us. It is a collection of devotional poems that were probably familiar to thousands of converts who throughout the East gave up the world for Christ. These verses with their noble imagery and true sentiment stood to them for the expression of the spirit they were of. They entered in and rested fruitfully in their memory, and mingled with their

new thoughts of holy things. They were pure and swift vehicles by whose help minds a little while ago corrupt rose up to God. They were sung devoutly perhaps by the slaves and humble-folk of great cities, and were not seldom on the lips of young martyrs like Perpetua and Felicitas amid the horrors of the amphitheatre. Therefore there is a sacredness about them that forbids us to treat them as common verse.

Their "untroubled joyousness" is remarkable. Sin and repentance are not dwelt upon, only the bright purity of the new life. There is only one obscure reference to the Eucharist. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is implied. God is the Creator-Father, Jesus Christ is the Incarnate Son, born of a Virgin, crucified "on the outspread tree" "to redeem His people," and the basis is laid for the imagery of the Harrowing of Hell, upon which after-writers built. And the thought of the Holy Spirit is seldom absent. We must remember that these songs date from the time when the reserve of Christian teachers was tending more and more to the "disciplina arcani," i.e. the giving of complete teaching only to the baptised. They are certainly not of heretical origin, although a passage in Ode xii. suggests Gnosticism, and five of them, as we have seen, are appropriated by the writer of the *Pistis Sophia*. Their intensely mystical character will account for their appeal to Gnostic thinkers, but this in no way affects their orthodoxy.

Of the forty-one odes twenty-five are placed in the mouths of catechumens, six are spoken by the Church. In Ode x. Christ is the speaker, and the remainder are more of the nature of dialogues in which Christ, the catechumens, and the Church take part.

Archbishop Bernard thinks the unity of style, and the recurrence to the same themes—love, knowledge, truth, faith, joy, hope, rest, light, peace, redemption, and grace—sug-

gest that the odes are all by one writer. But of course there are periods when the same spirit animates several writers, and the productions of a school of poets become so similar that they seem to be the outpouring of one mind.

Their date, according to the Archbishop, would most probably be "between 150 and 200, and preferably in the latter half of that period".

In these hymns the Lord is the Christian's crown, "not like a withered crown which blossometh not; but thou livest upon my head and thou hast blossomed upon my head" (i). "He is as a garland upon my head, and I shall not be moved; even if everything be shaken I stand firm; and if all things visible should perish, I shall not die, because the Lord is with me and I am with Him. Hallelujah" (v). The Spirit of the Lord moves within the Christian "as the hand moves over the harp, and the strings speak" (vi). His joy in the Lord is "as the sun to them that seek its daybreak; because He is my Sun and His rays have made me rise up, and His light hath dispelled all darkness from my face . . . The way of error I have left, and have walked towards Him, and have received salvation from Him without grudging" (xv). His hope resembles all natural beautiful things—it is like the honey distilling from the honeycomb, the milk from a loving mother's breasts, the fountain gushing forth. He is radiant with an overpowering joy. "My face exults with His gladness and my spirit exults in His love, and my soul shines in Him" (xl). "I was carried like a child by his mother; and the dew of the Lord gave me milk" (xxxv). And over him broods a profound peace—"As the wings of doves over their nestlings, and the mouth of their nestlings towards their mouths, so also are the wings of the Spirit over my heart . . . I believed and therefore I was at rest" (xxviii). "I love the Beloved, and my soul loves Him: and where His rest is, there also am I . . . I have been united

to Him, for the Lover has found the Beloved, and because I shall love Him that is the Son, I shall become a son ; for he that is joined to Him that is immortal, will also become immortal " (iii). As an example of a very short ode, which is full of the spirit in them all, we will set down Ode xxxii :—

" To the blessed there is joy from their hearts, and light from Him that dwells in them ; and words from the Truth, Who was self-originate : for He is strengthened by the holy power of the Most High ; and He is unshakable for ever and ever. Hallelujah."

These odes contain even deeper beauties than the rhapsodies of simple faith : there are wonderful passages like this on the " Word " :—" The mouth of the Lord is the true Word, and the door of His light ; and the Most High hath given it to His worlds, which are the interpreters of His beauty, and the repeaters of His praise, and the confessors of His counsel, and the heralds of His thought, and the chasteners of His servants. For the swiftness of the Word cannot be expressed, and according to its swiftness, so is its sharpness ; and its course knows no limit. For as its work is, so is its expectation : for it is light and the dawning of thought, and by it the worlds talk to one another . . . for the dwelling-place of the Word is man ; and its truth is love " (xii).

JUSTIN MARTYR.

To most converts the new religion came as an escape from sin and weakness of will, to a few it was a refuge from ignorance and unsatisfied questioning. And Justin was one of the latter. He came to Christ as a philosopher, and he remained the Christian philosopher, a new Socrates teaching and asking questions in the streets and market-places of great cities. He found in St. John's doctrine of "The Word," a road on which it was possible to begin the development of a Christian philosophy that would answer many hard questions. By the presence of that Divine Word, one day to be incarnate in Jesus Christ, he taught that the great heathen as well as the great Jews had followed truth.

Justin was born about A.D. 100 at Flavia Neapolis in Palestine, the ancient Shechem, and was probably martyred in A.D. 163. Though he calls himself a Samaritan he seems to have been of Greek race. He tells us in the *Dialogue with Trypho* of his youthful yearning to know about God —how he went from teacher to teacher unsatisfied, how the Stoic left room for nothing but mechanism in the universe, how the Aristotelian thought first of his fees, how the Pythagorean wished to teach him mathematics and astronomy as a preparation for divinity, how he then came under the guidance of a Platonist, whose teaching he was able in great measure to retain as a Christian. Then follows the story of his conversation with the wise old man by the seashore, which resulted in his becoming a Christian. He heard of a truth unknown to philosophers that could be

learned from prophets, who spoke by the Divine Spirit, and found it most of all in the words of Christ: "For they possess a terrible power in themselves, and are sufficient to inspire those who turn aside from the path of rectitude with awe; while the sweetest rest is afforded those who make a diligent practice of them" (*Trypho*, c. viii.). Thus he became a Christian, and devoted his life to going from place to place, and teaching as the philosophers of the time taught, only his teaching was the defence of the Gospel of Christ.

Of the various books attributed to Justin three are certainly genuine—*The First and Second Apologies*, and the *Dialogue with Trypho*, written respectively, 147 (141, Eusebius), 150, and about 160. The Apologies show us how Christianity was presented to the heathen world, the Trypho how it was necessary to meet the arguments of the Jews.

The First Apology consists of sixty-eight chapters, and is addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and Lucius his adopted son. Its argument is briefly as follows:—

(i.-iv.) I, Justin, ask justice for the Christians, a fair and impartial investigation of their case. It is too common to condemn Christians merely for their name. (v.-viii.). Like Socrates we are charged with atheism, but we worship Father, Son and Spirit, and believe in future rewards and punishments. (ix.-xiii.) We reject idol worship, and believe God wants us to imitate Him, we look for His Kingdom, and forward good government by making men good. (xiv.-xvii.) The daemons misrepresent us to your minds. Think of our changed lives, and of the uniqueness of Christ's teaching on chastity, love, mercy, trust in God, patience, oaths, civil obedience, (Matt. xxii. 17-21).

(xviii., xix.) Arguments for the Resurrection. (xx.-xxiii.) The Stoics and Plato held similar doctrines to ours: Heathen gods had sons who suffered: This was false, and

a parody of our true doctrine; it was invented by the daemons in anticipation of the teaching that Jesus Christ is the only proper Son, Who has been begotten by God, being His Word and first-begotten, and power.

(xxv.-xxvi.) Heathen worships differ, but we alone are persecuted for peculiarity, and for our rejection of false unworthy tales, and contempt for charlatans like Simon of Gitteh, Menander his disciple, and Marcion. (xxvii.-xxix.) We abhor the practice of exposing children (they are often saved only to be instruments of gross sin) for God loves all. We are continent, and only marry for the sake of children. A young Christian was lately refused permission by the governor to become an eunuch: compare this with the Antinous scandal. (xxx.-xxxv.) But was Christ a wizard? His advent and work was foretold by the Hebrew prophets, which were translated by the LXX, and are in the hands of the Jews our chief enemies, as Barcochba recently proved. E.g. by Moses (Gen. xlix. 10; Isaiah xi. 1). His Virgin birth was foretold (Is. vii. 14). Its locality (Micah v. 2). His crucifixion (Is. ix. 6; Is. lxv. 2, lviii. 2; Ps. xxii. 16) which you can verify from *The Acts of Pilate* (xxxvi.-xlii.). Some prophecies are in the person of the Father, some of the Son (e.g. Is. i. 14, xviii. 6; Ps. xxii. 7), some of the Spirit (e.g. Is. ii. 3). All have been exactly fulfilled. We die willingly confessing Christ, like soldiers who have taken the oath, not like the character in Euripides (Hipp. 608). (xliii.-xliv.) This does not do away with Free-will; God's foreknowledge, and decrees about retribution do not destroy human responsibility. (xlv.) The Ascension was foretold (Ps. cx. 1). (xlvi.) But note that Christ is the Word of Whom every race of men were partakers, and those who lived under His guidance were Christians, though thought atheists: e.g. Socrates, Abraham. (xlvii.-lii.) The prophets foretold the desolation of Jerusalem, Christ's miracles of

healing, His death, His rejection, humiliation, and majesty (Is. lii. 13-15, liii. 1-12). (liii.) "How could we believe of a crucified man that He is the first-born of the Unbegotten God, and Himself will judge the human race, unless we had found *testimonies* concerning Him, published before He came and was born as man, and unless we saw things had happened accordingly?" (l.-lv.) Mythology furnishes no such evidence. It is simply the invention of the daemons, who stole their material from the prophets: e.g. the tale of Bacchus is founded on Gen. xlix. 10, and also that of Bellerophon. So arose the myths of Perseus and Aesculapius. The cross alone they did not imitate, for they did not understand it: yet it underlies the form of man and all his works by sea and land. (lvi.-lviii.) The daemons are still active: they inspired Simon, and Menander, and the former was honoured at Rome with a statue: they stir up persecutions, and raised up Marcion, who preaches "another god and another son".

(lix.-lx.) Plato borrowed his cosmogony from Moses; and also says in the Timaeus of the Son of God—"He placed him as a letter X on the Universe," which he borrows from Num. xxi. 8. His "Third around the third" too, is the Spirit of God of Gen. i. 1.

(lxi.-lxv.) Passing to our rites. Our converts, after prayer and fasting in which we join, are brought by us where there is water and are regenerated in the same way in which we ourselves were regenerated. For in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the Universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing of water. For Christ also said "Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven". Its reason we learned from the Apostles. They taught that in it was a new birth from necessity and ignorance to free choice and knowledge and the forgiveness of sins. It is called

"Illumination". It has been imitated by the daemons in heathen religions, just as the removal of shoes is borrowed from the vision of the Bush in the Old Testament, in which it was the Word of God, not the "nameless God," that spoke to Moses. This distinction between God and His Word is not understood by the Jews. The daemons also borrowed the idea of the Spirit, and applied it to Kore, the goddess of Wells, and to Artemis, "the first conception" of Zeus.

After the Baptism we bring the baptized to the congregation to offer prayer. We salute one another with a kiss. "Bread and wine mixed with water are then brought to 'the president of the brethren,' and he taking them, gives praise and glory to the Father of the Universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive those things at his hands. And when he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings all the people present express their assent by saying, Amen." Next "those whom we call deacons give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion".

(lxvi.) "And this food is called among us 'The Eucharist,' of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things which we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive those; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour having been made flesh by the word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and

flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus, Who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said 'This do ye in remembrance of Me, this is My body'; and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, 'This is My blood,' and gave it to them alone." (This rite the daemons have imitated in the mysteries of Mithra.)

(lxvii.) "And we afterwards continually remind one another of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather in one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and as we said before, when our prayer is ended, bread, and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his power, and the people assent saying, Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well-to-do and willing give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or any other cause are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning with us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on

which we hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn; and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His disciples and apostles, He taught them those things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration."

(lxviii.) If all this is reasonable, respect it. If it seems absurd, despise us, but do not persecute us. Injustice will not escape God's judgment. Though Hadrian's letter entitles us to demand fair treatment, we appeal here not on the ground of his decision, but on the inherent justice of our cause.

(Hadrian's letter to Minucius Fundanus (see Euseb., *H.E.* iv. 8) follows: in which he lays down that Christians may be tried for breach of law, but that accusers, inspired by mere calumny, are themselves to be severely punished.)

The Second Apology throws interesting light upon the conditions of Christian life in Rome. A Christian lady who desired a divorce from a dissolute husband was betrayed by him to the authorities. She was herself respited, but Ptolemaeus, who had converted her, was accused before Lollius Urbicus, the praefect of the city. He was condemned without proper trial, and a certain Lucius who objected to the injustice was also condemned. Justin, in spite of the peril of so doing, protests to the Senate, and in answer to the taunt that if the Christians want to die they should commit suicide—answers "We do not wish to die: but we are resolved to confess the truth, even though we know it will slay us". He develops here more fully his doctrine of the Divine Word, which he holds "to have been originally manifested in humanity as a seed showing itself in

gradual development here and there until its full fructification in Christ". All men have a germ of it in their reason and will. Its fuller development in men like Socrates has ever met with opposition. In Christ it was perfectly developed, and His followers are justified in appropriating all the partial rays of truth that preceded the shining of the full light. It follows that they being endowed with the full truth must be ready to die for it.

Justin's *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho* is a longer and more elaborate work, distinguished by the liveliness given by a dramatic form. Trypho wishes to be satisfied on two points, firstly, How Christians who acknowledge the authority of the Old Testament can discard the Law of Moses, and secondly, How they can put their trust in a human Saviour for salvation.

In his answer to the first question Justin, following the Epistle to the Hebrews, dwells on the transitory nature of the Law; it is fulfilled in Christ Who takes away sin, which caused the existence of the Law. The Law never manifested the character of God. God gave it because of the failure of the Jews to understand Him. Thus Justin did not treat the Law like St. Paul as a necessary part of God's historical purpose.

He answers the second question by an elaborate examination of the common ground between Trypho and himself, viz. the Old Testament, and shows how theophanies and prophecies imply a duality within the Godhead, which means the co-equality with the Father of the Being afterwards revealed as Christ. Here he uses language that would have been impossible to the orthodox later in the Church's history, but one could hardly expect his speculations to harmonize exactly with the decisions to be arrived at by Councils after two centuries of controversy.

The conclusion shows Trypho, who has throughout been

as courteous as his opponent, somewhat shaken in his position. They part in the most friendly spirit, Justin praying that Trypho and his friends "recognizing that intelligence is given to every man, may be of the same opinion as ourselves, and believe that Jesus is the Son of God".

We owe to Justin a picture of the Church going forth to convince both Jews and Greeks always on grounds of reason and such criticism as was open to the scholarship of his day. We owe him models of courteous and fair discussion under the constant restraint of his effort to understand his opponents' point of view. He is so full of faith that he can afford to be indulgent to the Jews, and indeed to all but the Gnostic heretics, whom he lost no opportunity of exposing. His conception of "the Word," was a grand development of St. John's teaching, and became in the hands of later teachers a key to the greatest mysteries, and a comprehensive philosophy of Christianity. It is a truth that fills one of the noblest spheres of Christian thought to-day. It stands for a broad, philosophic attitude, and a real sense of God's purpose being worked out in human reason.

Justin writes as one well acquainted with Greek poetry and philosophy. It is to Plato that he owes most. He quotes largely and correctly from the Old Testament. The incorrectness of some of his New Testament quotations raises the question how far he knew our canonical writings. Both Westcott and Sanday agree that he knew most of our New Testament documents, and means by "the memoirs of the Apostles" our four Gospels, and not apocryphal books. He quotes from St. Paul and from the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, and attributes *The Apocalypse* to St. John.

With Justin we pass from the earlier stages of Christian literature, when writings were put forth in letter or pamphlet as the moment required, to the period of studied and elaborate writing by skilled professional hands. He preserves

the freshness of the earlier age, while he becomes the basis for the methods of later theologians. He gives us, moreover, hints and pictures of the thought and worship of the Church of his own day that are of inestimable value, and not least the description of the Sacramental rites in passages of simple beauty, which are appealed to in every age as sure witnesses to the place of the Sacraments in Christian life, and to the grace that they convey.

We must not forget that Justin was a martyr; he was no mere exponent of plausible arguments: the fire that burns steadily in his quiet persistent style was intensely real. He died for the faith that he had lived to champion against Jew and Greek.

THE APOLOGY OF ARISTIDES.

Apologies or defences of the Christians are said by Eusebius to have been presented to the Emperor Hadrian by Quadratus and Aristides at Athens as early as A.D. 125 (Euseb., *H.E.*, iv. 3). And he gives some striking passages from the former. We are now in possession of the latter, *The Apology of Aristides*, and its discovery forms one of the romances of recent scholarly enterprise. But now that we have it, though it is full of evidences of a very early date, there are sound reasons which make it unlikely that it could have been presented to Hadrian at either of his recorded visits to Athens. It seems far more probable that it was presented to his adopted son, Antoninus Pius, either very early in his reign, or during his proconsulate at Smyrna, before he ascended the imperial throne, i.e. before A.D. 138. A study of the evidence seems to force the conclusion that Eusebius mistook the superscription of the Apology in referring it to Hadrian.

A fragment of the opening of the work in Armenian was published first from the Lazarist monastery at Venice. And it was in 1889 that Professor Rendel Harris found a text in Syriac in the convent of St. Catherine upon Mount Sinai. This he translated and edited with great care and scholarship, and was on the point of publishing when another remarkable discovery was made by Dr. Armitage Robinson. He was studying the medieval Romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat* at Vienna, when it became clear to him that the lost work of Aristides was incorporated in that romance,

and comparison with Dr. Harris' Syriac text made the identity undoubted. The *Barlaam and Josaphat* text is Greek, and the question of course arose whether it was indeed the original work of Aristides, or whether it had been considerably altered when included in the romance. The Greek text differed considerably from the Syriac, and it was a problem for scholars to decide whether the differences were due to the Syriac translator or to the compiler of *Barlaam and Josaphat*. Dr. Robinson concludes that it is safest to trust the Greek, unless there is any strong reason to believe the Syriac version to be nearer to the original. In embodying the Apology in his book, the romance-writer naturally had to make some necessary minor alterations.

Barlaam and Josaphat, now accessible in the Loeb library of translations, probably dates from the sixth century. It tells how Josaphat, an Eastern prince, whose story is based on that of Buddha, is shielded in his youth from all contact with sorrow and death, and how a monk named Barlaam comes disguised as a merchant, expounds to him the Christian hope, baptizes him, and disappears. The king in anger arranges a contest in which a certain Nachor is to impersonate Barlaam and deliver a feeble defence of Christianity, which will be easily refuted by the rhetoricians in order to disgust Josaphat with his new faith. Like Balaam of old he comes to curse, and ends by blessing, and like Balaam's ass he speaks words he does not intend, which result in the conversion of the king and his people. Josaphat afterwards ascends the throne, but resigns the kingdom in order to be with Josaphat in the desert. The speech delivered by the impersonator of Barlaam was *The Apology of Aristides*, with such slight alterations as were obviously required in order to adapt it to an Eastern environment.

As signs of early date Dr. Harris notes the simplicity of

style, the antique cast of religious ideas and practices, and the friendly attitude to the Jews, in marked contrast to that found in the martyrdom of Polycarp and the Epistle to Diognetus—"If the Church is not in the writer's time any longer under the wing of the Synagogue, it has apparently no objection to taking the Synagogue occasionally under its own wing". He notes too that it contains traces of a very primitive Christian creed, which may be tentatively restored as follows:—

> We believe in one God, Almighty
> Maker of Heaven and Earth:
> . . . . . .
> Born of the Virgin Mary:
> . . . . . .
> He was pierced by the Jews:
> He died and was buried:
> The third day He rose again:
> He ascended into Heaven:
> . . . . . .
> He is about to come to judge.

The Apology has but few references to Holy Scripture and no quotations from the New Testament, "although the Apologists' diction is coloured at times by the language of the Apostolic writers" (Robinson, p. 82). But the Emperor is twice referred to in the Christian writings (p. 110, l. 21, and p. 111, l. 24). In the first instance a written Gospel is implied. There are passages that suggest a dependence on the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, or more probably on the "Two Ways," which is incorporated in that document, and also in the *Epistle of Barnabas*. Dr. Robinson also argues that it has a great deal of matter common to the *Preaching of Peter*, so far as can be deduced from a reconstruction of that lost work from its known fragments. There

are also points of contact with *The Epistle to Diognetus* and the Christian *Sibylline Oracles*. Dr. Robinson makes it fairly certain, too, that the course of the argument of Celsus which is the object of Origen's attack, at the end of the second century, shows that one of the sources of his knowledge of Christianity, and indeed the basis of his criticism, was either *The Apology of Aristides*, or *The Preaching of Peter*.

The following is a brief abstract of Dr. Harris' translation of the Syriac text:—

The apology which Aristides the philosopher made before Hadrian the King concerning the worship of God.

[To the Emperor] Cæsar Titus Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius from Marcianus Aristides a philosopher of Athens.

(i) Heaven, earth, and sea led me to believe in one Mover of all, the Incomprehensible God, unbegotten, without beginning, Who needs nothing, while all need Him, without name, likeness, or sex, unerring, unforgetting, needing no sacrifices.

(ii) There are four races of men, Barbarians, Greeks, Jews, and Christians. The Barbarians reckon their origin from Kronos: the Greeks from Helenus, Machus, Danaus, Kadmus, and Dionysus. The Jews from Abraham. And the Christians reckon the beginning of their religion from Jesus Christ, Son of God born of a Hebrew virgin, Who had twelve disciples, was pierced, dead and buried, rose and ascended to heaven: and His disciples went forth and taught His greatness.

(iii-vii) Which race holds the truth? Not the Barbarians. For they served the created instead of the Creator, viz. dead images. Also among them is the worship of earth, water, air, or the sun. Some err in worshipping men of old. And none of these correspond to our true idea of God.

(viii-xi) The Greeks being wiser err more seriously. Many of their gods are made by hand. They have sex and sexual passion, they suffered, died, sinned grossly, and thus afforded terrible examples of vice for man's imitation. Note the stories of Kronos, Zeus, Hephaestus, Asklepios, Ares, Dionysus, Herakles, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite and Adonis, Rhea and Kore.

(xii) The Egyptians have erred the worst. They worship beasts, reptiles, and plants. Note the story of Isis, Osiris, Horus, and Typhon. In their madness they worship the sheep, calf, pig, cat, and other animals.

(xiii) The Greeks should have known better, and not worshipped idols that decay. They should have realized that God needs no sacrifice. Their philosophic doctrine of the unity of God should have taught them one God could not persecute another. Their good laws, too, condemn their lawless gods.

(xiv) The Jews are nearer truth, worshipping God, not his works, and " they imitate God by reason of the love they have for man ; for they have compassion on the poor, and ransom the captive, and bury the dead." Yet they err in their worship. " They suppose in their minds that they are serving God, but in the methods of their actions their service is to angels and not to God."

(xv) The Christians have found the truth by seeking, as their writings show. They know God the Creator, and keep His commandments in hope of the world to come. They are pure, straightforward, honourable, beneficent, upright. They do not worship idols. " Whatever they do not wish that others should do to them they do not practice towards anyone." They make their enemies friends. Their women are pure, and their men chaste. They persuade their slaves to be Christians, and then treat them as brethren : they tell the truth, and love one another, helping widows, orphans

and strangers "for they do not call brothers those who are after the flesh, but those who are in the spirit and in God"; they pay for the burial of the poor, and provide for those "who are imprisoned for the name of their Messiah". "And if there is among them a man that is poor and needy, . . . they fast two or three days that they may supply the needy with their necessary food. And they observe scrupulously the commandments of their Messiah; . . . every morning and at all hours on account of the goodnesses of God towards them they praise and laud Him: and over their food and drink they render Him thanks. And if any righteous person of their number passes away from the world they rejoice and give thanks to God, and they follow his body, as if he were moving from one place to another: and when a child is born to anyone of them, they praise God, and if again it chance to die in its infancy, they praise God mightily, as for one who has passed through the world without sins." At the death of the sinful they lament, foreseeing their punishment.

(xvi) They ask aright and so receive. "And because they acknowledge the goodnesses of God towards them, lo! on account of them flows forth the beauty that is in the world." They hide their good deeds, like a treasure. You can learn about them and their ways from their writings. "Truly this people is a new people, and there is something divine mingled with it." I have not spoken of them of myself, but as I have read in their writings. "And I have no doubt that the world stands by reason of the intercession of the Christians."

(xvii) Their writings contain not only words, but things actually done. The Christians are shamefully maligned by the Greeks, who attribute their own sensual vices to them: the Christians pity them and pray for them. And if one of them turns, he is ashamed, confesses his sins, and is forgiven because he sinned in ignorance.

Let oppression of the Christians cease. Let those who do not know the true God come and learn from them, and be prepared for "the dread judgment which is to come by Jesus the Messiah upon the whole race of men."

The Apology of Aristides the Philosopher is ended.

TATIAN.

TATIAN was a native of the Tigris valley, at a time when Roman government and Greek education united its inhabitants to the Western world. His restless mind led him to travel in pursuit of knowledge and a satisfying religion. He heard philosophers but was disgusted at their greed. He was initiated into "mysteries," but they and the popular pagan religions alike failed to impress him. His high moral tone revolted at the honour that Roman art paid to immorality, at the indecencies of the stage and the brutality of the arena. In utter despair he was losing hold on hope, when he says, "I came across certain barbarian writings, older in point of antiquity than the doctrines of the Greeks, and far too divine to be marked by their errors. What persuaded me in these books was the simplicity of the language, the artless style of the writers, the noble explanation of creation, the predictions of the future, the excellence of the precepts, and the assertion of the government of all by One Being. My soul being thus taught of God I understand how the writings of the Gentiles lead to condemnation, but the Sacred Scriptures to freedom from this world's slavery, liberating us from thousands of tyrants, and giving us, not indeed what we had not received, but, what we had once received, but lost through error" (Oratio. c. xxix.). At Rome he became a pupil of Justin, and ere long showed himself a controversialist of strikingly original power, and satirical force. In the "Oration to the Greeks," which belongs to this period of his life, he answers the sneers of

the decadent heathen world by carrying the war into the pagan camp. He outlines the Christian faith definitely against the illogical and sullied background of mythology. He is merciless in his criticism of heathen belief. Unlike other apologists he admits no analogies between the pagan and the Christian tenets. And he devotes himself to drawing out the superior antiquity of Christianity as in its essence implicit in Judaism. He upholds the doctrine of "The Word," in a different form to that of Justin, as the distinctive dogma of Christianity, and as the philosophic explanation of the universe. And in his moral intensity he is ever enlarging upon the goodness, and truth and purity of Christian ethical ideas as contrasted with the vicious follies of pagan thought and practice.

After Justin's martyrdom Tatian developed heretical ideas and retired to his native land, where he seems, in rigid asceticism and in strict obedience to the light that was in him, to have finished his days presenting to simple minds, unused to the disputes of a refined theology, the simple Gospel that his own independent mind had distilled from a very acute and intimate acquaintance with the Old and New Testaments. For the Churches of Edessa he produced a Harmony of the Four Gospels, called the *Diatessaron*, which reveals his ardent love of St. John's record, without depreciation of the first three Gospels.

He died at Edessa somewhere about A.D. 180. His heretical views seem to have been some form of *Encratism*, a school of asceticism, abjuring marriage, animal food and wine, as definitely evil, and ultimately tending to a Docetic view of Christ's Humanity.

Two extracts will suffice to give an idea of the style of the Oration. Tatian thus satirizes the philosophers :—

"What great and wonderful things have your philosophers effected? They leave uncovered one of their shoulders:

they let their hair grow long; they cultivate their beards; their nails are like the claws of wild beasts. Though they say that they want nothing, yet, like Proteus,[1] they need a currier for their wallet, and a weaver for their mantle, and a woodcutter for their staff, and rich (patrons), and a cook for their gluttony. O man competing with the dog, you know not God, and so have turned to the imitation of a dumb animal! You cry out in public with an assumption of authority, and take upon you to avenge yourself; and if you receive nothing you indulge in abuse, and philosophy is with you the art of getting money. . . . While inquiring what God is, you are ignorant of what is in yourselves; and while staring all agape at the sky, you stumble into pitfalls. The reading of your books is like walking through a labyrinth, and their readers resemble the cask of the Danaids" (c. 25 and 26).

He thus describes the Christians:—

"Not only do the rich among us pursue our philosophy, but the poor enjoy instruction gratuitously; for the things that come from God surpass the requital of worldly gifts. Thus we admit all who desire to hear, even old women and striplings; and in short, persons of every age are treated by us with respect, but every kind of licentiousness we keep at a distance. And in speaking we do not utter falsehood. It would be an excellent thing if your continuance in unbelief could be kept in check; but however that may be, let our cause be decided by the judgment of God. Laugh, if you please, but you will have to weep hereafter" (c. 32).

If the *Oration* is in some respects similar to other evidential works of the second century, it is far otherwise with the *Diatessaron*. By his original idea of combining extracts from the four recognized Gospels into one connected narrative, Tatian not only showed his sincere desire

[1] I.e. the Cyric Peregrinus.

to present the life and words of Christ to the Eastern Church in a simple form, but he unknowingly gave the greatest support to the authority of the four canonical Gospels. Only in a few rare and unimportant instances does he stray outside the canon in his selections. And this is a strong support to the orthodox view of the unique position of our four Gospels.

It is owing chiefly to the work of Zahn that this lost book has been recovered. Being written in Syriac and used in the far East it was little known to the Fathers. Eusebius says "Tatian composed a sort of harmony, or compilation, I know not how, of the Gospels, and called it the *Diatessaron*. This work is current in certain quarters to-day" (Euseb., *H.E.* iv. 29). Theodoret, who found it in use in over 200 churches in his diocese by the Euphrates, writes about A.D. 453 that he was dissatisfied with its omission of the genealogies of Christ, and had it replaced by the four Gospels. Yet we know it continued to be used in the East.

The story of its recovery is as follows: A Harmony of the Gospels in Latin was discovered in A.D. 654, by Victor, Bishop of Capua, which he suggested might be a translation of Tatian's work, mentioned by Eusebius: but the suggestion remained unsupported for eleven hundred years, until in 1806 an Armenian version of the commentary of Ephraem, Bishop of Edessa (*circ.* A.D. 360), was printed at Venice, and translated into Latin in 1876. It was then seen that the basis of Ephraem's Commentary was the work discovered by Bishop Victor. In 1886 two Arabic versions were brought to light, one in Egypt and one in the Vatican: and an edition was published at the celebration of Pope Leo X.'s jubilee. Zahn bestowed immense labour on the work of reproducing the text in sections, and made it possible to follow and to understand Tatian's method of selection.

As a summary of the main scheme, Zahn gives the following twelve headings (i. pp. 257-260) :—

(i) The Logos; the Incarnation and Childhood of Jesus.
(ii) The first manifestations of Jesus.
(iii) The beginning of ministerial work.
(iv) Jesus in Galilee.
(v) Journey through Samaria.
(vi) Sojourn in Galilee.
(vii) The Feast of Tabernacles at Jerusalem.
(viii) Journey through (Peraea or) Galilee and back.
(ix) Jesus at Jerusalem at the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple.
(x) Events connected with the raising of Lazarus.
(xi) The entry into Jerusalem, etc., and events connected with the Last Supper.
(xii) The Passion, Resurrection and Ascension.

Thus under the first heading Tatian's order ran :—

1. St. John i. 1-5. Preface.
2. St. Luke i. 5-79. Zacharias and Elizabeth. The Annunciation. Songs of Elizabeth and Mary. Birth of John. Prophecy of Zacharias.
3. St. Matt. i. 18-25. Birth of our Lord.
4. St. Luke ii. 1-35 (? 38). Birth of our Lord. The Shepherds; the presentation in the Temple.
5. St. Matt. ii. 1-23. Visit of Magi.
6. St. John i. 6-28. St. John Baptist. His answer to the Levites.
7. St. Luke ii. 41-52. Jesus in the Temple.

Tatian no doubt followed mainly the chronological order of St. Matthew, but he often seems to have wished to present also an order not only of time but of idea, as when in the above example he introduces St. John the Baptist's answer between the Visit of the Magi and the story of Jesus in the Temple. He selects freely from parallel narratives that which he prefers: e.g. he takes St. Mark's and St. Luke's account of the healing of the *one* blind man in preference to St. Matthew's, which gives two. He does not even restrict himself to the Gospels, for he takes his account of the Last Supper from 1 Corinthians, and the death of Judas from the Acts.

Tatian's reputation as a heretic, and the circulation of the *Diatessaron* in Syriac in the far East, may both have contributed to its being almost ignored in the age of the Fathers. But it has come back to the Church of to-day with a great and reassuring message. At anyrate it tells us that by the middle of the second century the four Gospels occupied a supreme, a unique, position from one end of the Church to the other. We realise from the cumulative evidence that comes in greater or less measure from all the writings that have been before us in our survey of Early Christian Literature, that this is true of a far earlier date. But Tatian's *Diatessaron* decides the matter, and provides insoluble problems for those who deny the primitive origin of our four canonical Gospels.

INDEX.

A

Abraham, 1, 94.
Acts of Apostles, 6, 7.
— — *Andrew*, 74.
— — *John*, 73.
— — *Paul*, 73.
— — *Peter*, 73.
— — *Thomas*, 74.
Adoptionism, 48
Aeon, 61.
Aesculapius, 84.
Agape, 35.
Akhmîm, 70.
Alexandria, 37.
Alexandrinus Codex, 9.
Allegorizing, 39.
Andrew, St., 25, 56.
Angels, 47.
Anicetus Pope, 26.
Anti-Christ, 36.
Antinous, 81.
Antioch, 12.
Antoninus Pius, 50, 82, 91.
Apocalypse, 38, 89.
Apocalyptic views, 56.
Apologies of Justin, 82.
Apostles, 4, 32.
Apostolic Church Ordinances, 36.
Apostolic Constitutions, 36.
Arcadia, 42.
Archon, Great, 62.
Aristion, 25, 56.
Aristotelian, 81.
Armenia, 19.
Ascension of Isaiah, 75.

B

Bacchus, 84.
Baptism, 17, 31, 44, 84.
Bar-cochba, 83.
Bardesanes, 74.
Barlaam and Josaphat, 91.
Bartholomew, Gospel of, 71.
Basilides, 62, 70.
Batiffol, 15, 16.
Bellerophon, 84.
Bernard, J. H., 77.
Bible in Church, 51.
Bishops, 4, 17, 48.
Bito Valerius, 5.
Bridal Ode, 74.
Britain, 1.
Bryennius, 9, 30, 41.
Bunsen, 54.
Burkitt, F., 75.

C

Cain, 4.
Cainites, 72.
Canon of New Testament, 6, 66.
Catherine, St., Convent of, 77.
Celsus, 94.
Cerinthus, 62.
Christology, 6, 10, 16, 41, 52.
Christologies Ancient and Modern, 17.
Church charity, 18, 95.
Circumcision, 40.
Clement of Alexandria, 2, 37, 42, 51, 70, 73, 74.
Commodus, 50.
Corinth, 1, 10.
1 *Corinthians*, 1.
Constantinopolitanus Codex, 9, 30, 41.
Cramer, 58.
Crescens, 22.
Cruttwell, C. T., 22, 55, 75.
Cumae, 42.

Cureton, Canon, 19.
Cyril's Catechetical Lectures, 77.

D

Danaus, 94.
Daniel, 38.
Dante, 42.
Dathan and Abiram, 4.
De Pressensé, V.
Deacons, 4, 21.
Demiurge, 61, 63.
Dialogue with Trypho, 81, 88.
Diatessaron, 99.
Didascalia, 36.
Dioscuri, 74.
Disciplina arcani, 78.
Dionysus, 94.
Docetism, 16, 70, 99.
Domitian, 1.

E

Easter, time of, 26.
Ebionites, 62, *Gospel of*, 69.
Ecclesia, 44.
Edessa, 99.
Egyptians, *Gospel of*, 11, 70.
Encratism, 99.
Ephebus, 5, 55.
Ephesus, 12.
Ephraem of Edessa, 101.
— Syrus, 77.
Epiphanius, 62, 69, 72.
Eschatology, 33.
Eucharist, 17, 18, 31, 35, 85.
Euripides, 83.
Eusebius of Caesarea, 2, 12, 22, 29, 37, 55, 56, 57, 65, 71, 73, 74, 87, 91, 101.
Eve, *Gospel of*, 72.
Exegetica, 62.
Exposition of Oracles of the Lord, 55.
4 *Ezra*, 74.

F

Faith and Works, 6.
Fasting, 31, 47.
Flavia Neapolis, 81.
Florinus, *Epistle to*, 22.
Fortunatus, 5.
Funk, 19.

G

Gaius, 29.
Gallican, Churches, Letter of, 24.
Gamaliel, *Gospel of*, 72.
Germanicus, 26.
Gnostics, 11, 22, 60, 64.
Gospels in New Testament, 16, 60.
Grapte, 44.
Greeks, Tatian's Oration to, 98.
Grimme, 77.

H

Hadrian, 38, 87, 91.
Harnack, Professor, 19, 71, 76.
Harris, Rendel, 74, 76, 91.
Hebrews, *Epistle to*, 2, 5, 89.
— *Gospel of*, 69.
Hefele, 37.
Hegesippus, 2.
Helenus, 94.
Heresy, 21.
Hermes, 2.
Herod (of Smyrna), 27.
— the Great, 68.
Hierapolis, 55.
Hippolytus, 62.
Holy Spirit, the, 6, 17, 47.
Horus, 95.

I

Ignatius' Epistles, 2.
Inspiration (Sanday), 7.
Irenaeus, 2, 25, 29, 55, 62, 67, 71.
Isis, 94.

J

Jacob, 4.
James, St., 5, 56.
James, *Epistle of St.*, 6.
Jerome, St., 55, 72.
Joachim and Anna, 68.
John, St., 5, 25, 56, 57.
— the Elder, 25, 57.
John, *Acts of*, 73.

Jonah, 4.
Judaism, 52.
Judaizers, 17.
Judas, 56, *Gospel of*, 72.
Judith, 8.

K

Kadmus, 94.
Kenoma, 61.
Kirsopp Lake, Professor, 73, 74.

L

Laurentianus, Codex, 19.
Law, Mosaic, 4.
Leben Jesu, v.
Leo X., Pope, 101.
Leucian Acts, 72.
Lightfoot, Bishop, 3, 5, 7, 19, 24, 37, 42, 50, 54, 58.
Liturgies, Christian, 8.
Logos, 16.
Lollius Urbicus, 87.
Lord's Day, 33.
Lucius, 82.

M

Machus, 94.
Magnesia, 12.
Malachi, 34.
Manichaeans, 72.
Marcus Aurelius, 50.
Mark, St., 57.
Matthew, St., 56.
Marcion, 22, 62, *Gospel of*, 71, 83, 84.
Matthias, Gospel of, 71.
Mary, Gospel of, 71.
Martyrdom, 15, 27.
Menzies, Dr. A., 77.
Michael, St., 47.
Midrash, 67.
Millenarianism, 55.
Ministry, Christian, 4, 7, 17, 34.
Minucius Fundanus, 87.
Mitchell, Bishop, 42.
Mithra, 86.
Moffatt, Dr., 11, 67, 68, 69.
Muratorian Canon, 42, 67, 74.
Mysteries, 98.

N

Nazarenes, Gospel of, 69.
Nero, 1, 38.
New people, 96.
Nicodemus, Gospel of, 72.
Nirvana, 62.
Noah, 4.

O

Ophite Naasenes, Gospel of, 71.
Origen, 11, 37, 42, 63, 94.
Osiris, 94.
Oxyrhynchus fragments, 70.

P

Pantaenus, 51.
Papias, 25.
Pastoral Epistles, 6.
Paul, St., 2, 5, 11.
Paul, Acts of, 73.
Pella, 25.
Perpetua, 78.
Perseas, 84.
Peter, St., 2, 5, 56.
Peter, Acts of, 73.
— *Apocalypse of*, 74.
— *Gospel of*, 70.
— *Preaching of*, 93.
Philip, St., 25, 56.
— *Gospel of*, 71.
Philip of Tralles, 29.
Philippi, 20.
Philippians (Polycarp to), 2, 13.
Philomelium, 24.
Piers Plowman, 42.
Pilate, Acts of, 83.
Pionius, 24.
Pistis Sophia, 71, 76.
Pius I., Pope, 43.
Plato, 12, 82, 84.
Platonist, 81.
Pleroma, 61.
Pliny (*Letter to Trajan*), 35.
Polycarp, 2, 13.
Postel, 68.
Presbyter-Bishops, 2, 7, 17, 21.
Prophets, 19, 33, 46.
Protevangelium Jacobi, 68.
Psalms of Solomon, 76.

Pseudo-Matthew, 68.
Ptolemaeus, 87.
Pythagoreans, 87.

Q

Quadratus, 91.
Quintus, 26.
Quo Vadis? story, 73.

R

Relics, 28.
Renan, v.
Rhoda, 43.
Robinson, J. Armitage, 30, 91.
Romans, Epistle to, 8.
Rome, Church of, 8, 13.
Rufus, 20.

S

Sabbath, 40.
Sabellians, 70.
Salmon, Dr., 43.
Sanday, Dr., 7, 17, 89.
Scapegoat, 39.
Schmidt, 71, 72.
Shemoneh Esreh, 8.
Sibylline Oracles, 75, 94.
Simon of Gitteh, 62, 83, 84.
— Magus, 60.
Sinaiticus Codex, 37, 41, 49.
Smyrna, 13, 24, 91.
Socrates, 83.
— (historian), 29.
Solomon, 77.
Spain, 8.
"Station," 47.
Statius Quadratus, 29.
Stadium, 27.
Stoic, 81, 82.
Strasburg MS., 50.
Synoptic problem, 56.

T

Tatian, 7.
Taylor, Dr. C., 49.
Temple, the, 40.
Tertullian, 42, 62, 73.
Theodoret, 101.
Thomas, St., 56.
Thomas, Gospel of, 68.
Tigris, 98.
Timaeus, 84.
1 *Timothy*, 7.
Titus, Emperor, 37.
Titus, Epistle to, 7.
Trajan, 13.
Trallians, 12.
Troas, 13.
Two document theory, 59.
Two Ways, 30, 93.
Typhon, 95.

V

Valens, 22.
Valentinus, 62.
Vespasian, 38.
Via Campana, 42.
Victor (of Capua), 101.
Vie de Jésus, v.

W

Widows and Orphans, 44.
Westcott, 51, 89.
— and Hort, 56.
Word, doctrine of, 78, 79, 89, 99.

Z

Zahn, 19, 43, 101.
Zechariah, 34.
Zosimus, 20.

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